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THE WORST MIGHT BE
YET TO COME

By Chris Chang-Yen Phillips

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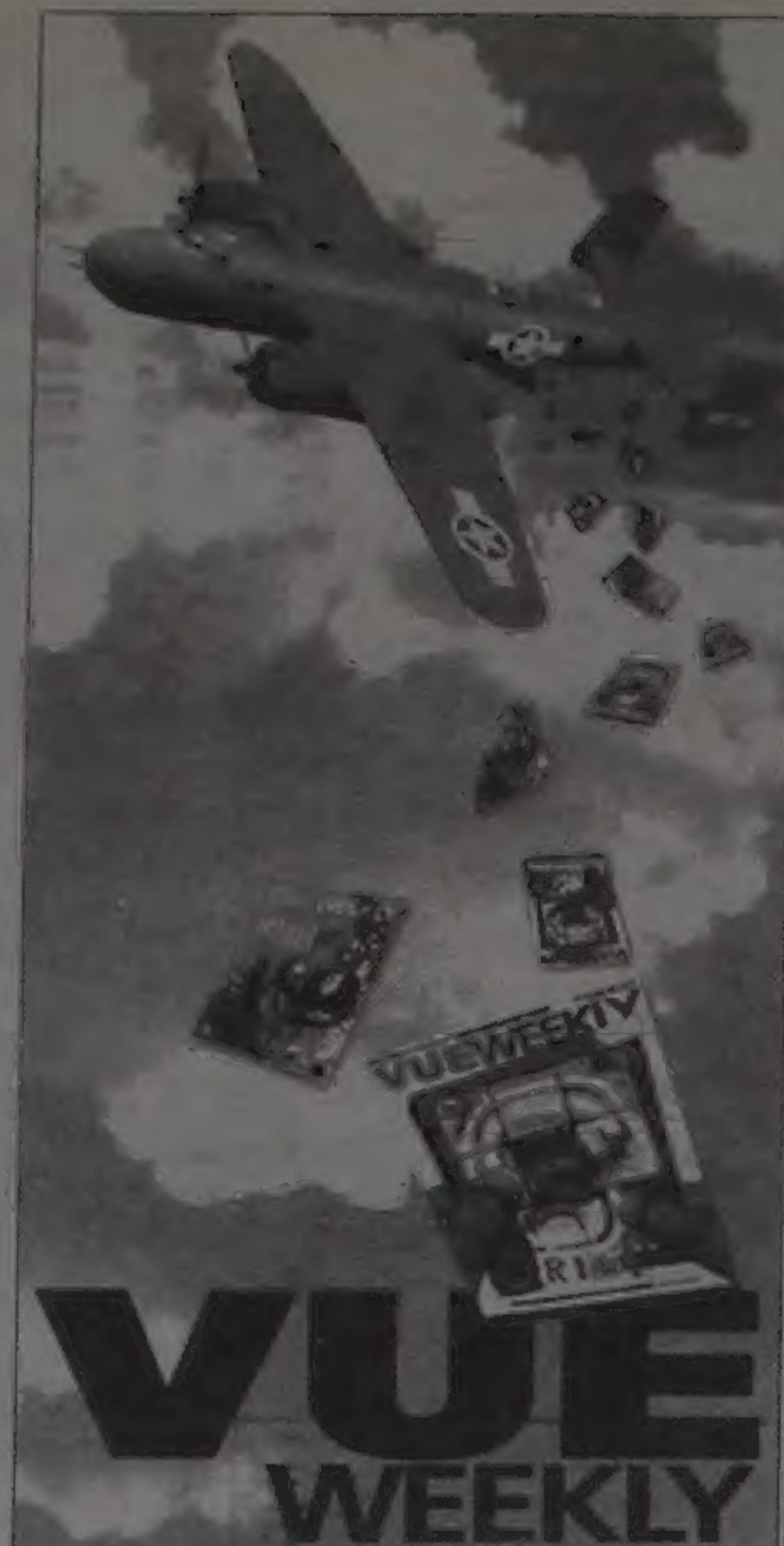
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EDITORIAL

Vuepoint Capturing billions

SCOTT HARRIS
// SCOTT@VUEWEEKLY.COM

For an unproven technology that may or may not actually prove to be feasible as a means of reducing the amount of carbon dioxide being pumped into the atmosphere, the costs of the Stelmach government's favourite (read: practically only) response to climate change is certainly managing to rack up some impressive cost estimates.

The Alberta government has already committed \$2 billion over the next decade or so to conduct three pilot projects to test the feasibility of carbon capture and storage (CCS), in which the emissions of large industrial emitters such as coal-fired power plants will be captured and injected underground rather than released into the atmosphere.

Now a new report by the Alberta Carbon Capture and Storage Development Council estimates that development of the technology will also require the provincial and/or federal governments to spend between \$1 billion and \$3 billion per year for a decade to support CCS after the initial demonstration projects are completed.

The report goes on to say that industry will also need to make "significant

additional investment," which it notes will be passed on to energy consumers. The "upside" is that using CCS for enhanced oil recovery could, somewhat ironically, boost conventional oil reserves in the province by 50 percent.

At almost the same time, Harvard University's Energy Technology Innovation Policy program released a discussion paper called "Realistic costs of Carbon Capture," which found that the cost of producing electricity with CCS will in the long run be similar to the cost premium associated with other forms of low-carbon energy production such as wind and solar thermal, and only slightly less expensive than estimated long-term costs of solar photovoltaics.

Of course there are differences between CCS and these other technologies, the most significant being that we know approaches like solar and wind will actually work, and that they can be implemented now with existing technology, not a decade from now after billions have been spent to find out if it even works.

Putting all our eggs in the costly, unproven and time-consuming CCS basket is a gamble we simply can't afford. If we're going to spend billions of taxpayer dollars, there are clearly better options. **V**

GRASDAL'S VUE



Letters

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

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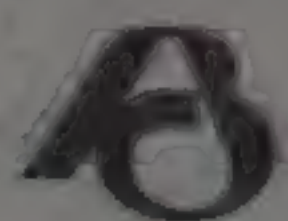
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THERE'S NO DENYING

There is so much wrong with this article ("State of denial," Jul 16 - Jul 22, 2009), but I will focus on my wife, Karri Stokely, who is mentioned in this quote in the article: "People like Karri Stokely are clearly in malignant denial—it's so unacceptable to believe you have a life-threatening disease when you have two little kids ... She, like Christine Maggiore, has taken it to a different level—where the bubble is so fragile around her that she has to maintain this reality and convince everyone else that HIV is a fraud."

I'm sure I know my wife better than anyone on this planet. Karri is the one person that is not in denial about anything, period. From the very beginning of her HIV diagnosis, Karri never questioned it. She vowed early on that it was not going to kill her, so like every good AIDS patient, she took her "cocktail" of drugs like clockwork, never missing a dose, for 11 years. She had spent many years in the medical field and was a true believer in modern medicine. Karri was so concerned about educating the youth about HIV and AIDS that she joined the AIDS speakers bureau and spoke to hundreds of people in schools, churches and shelters.

Karri was also well aware that maintaining good health starts with a healthy diet,

which I'm sure has kept her healthier than most people on the drugs. To say she was ever in denial about anything at all could not be further from the truth. Seth Kalichman does not even know my wife and here he is psychoanalyzing her. It never even crossed our minds that the HIV theory was debated by some, and if someone had told us that we would have probably dismissed them as being a kook.

We were not even daring to question her AIDS diagnosis. I had questioned whether we needed to get a second opinion back in 1996 but I was quickly told by the doctor and Karri that the tests were conclusive. I never even questioned it after that, until I found information on the Internet to the contrary, by accident.

We were extremely skeptical about all this new information. We tried our best to disprove the HIV questioners. We read information night and day for weeks and talked about it together. "It could not even be a little bit true," I remember thinking. "They have spent billions on this theory and there is a huge economy built around it. Everyone knows that HIV is the cause of AIDS," I thought, but no one has ever been able to show us the paper that proves that HIV is the cause of AIDS. I am still waiting on that proof.

For all the bashing that Seth does to the people he calls denialists, he never offers HIV proof. He is what I call an

"intellectual elitist." He will be quick to tell you that if you do not have the credentials, then you may not understand complicated medical science. That seems to be the common thread I see in the group of Internet blog posters, which is really what Seth is: a blog poster with a book.

Finally I want to say that Karri does not have a fragile bubble around her and she is not trying to convince others that HIV is a fraud so she can feel good about herself. All she is doing is letting others know that there is another side to AIDS that doctors never tell you about. If we had known what we know now, we would have been able to make an informed decision on her diagnosis.

If there is such a thing as the "thought police" Seth is one of them and his buddies over at aidstruth.org are too. Seth is always one of the first to bash any AIDS dissident for posting on an Internet blog.

Joe Stokely

A HUMBLE SUGGESTION

I humbly suggest that the name of Connie Howard's alt health column be changed to something more appropriate like "My Weekly Tirade About Vaccinations."

Peter Bailey

Parched Prairie

The drought is impacting thousands of Alberta farms, and the worst might be yet to come

CHRIS CHANG-YEN PHILLIPS
// CHRIS@VUEWEEKLY.COM

"Water, water everywhere but not a drop where it's needed."

So read Jerry Kitt's sign at the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market a few weeks ago. Beavers had made a huge mess damming up a forest creek on the Kitt family's farm, just west of Grande Prairie, but everywhere else the land has been too dry this summer to coax anything out of the ground. Even the hay Kitt usually sets aside to carry the livestock through the winter is a wash.

Fortunately, Kitt says, searching for an upside, their family has access to grazing land now for their bison and cattle. But when the winter comes, they won't be the only people in the province trying to buy hay for their animals.

"Everyone else has gone through a drought, too," he says. "And that pushes the cost up."

The lack of moisture this year, combined with cool weather in the spring, has put an intense amount of pressure on farming communities all around the province. Despite the wicked storm Edmonton received this July, many farmers say it's been too dry for too long to grow anything worth harvesting. A flood of farmers trying to cut their losses on this year's crops have prompted an unprecedented response from the province's farm insurance provider. And as researchers point to the health impacts of drought in the province, climate scientists say these events are going to get worse as climate change heats up Alberta in the years to come. Welcome to our sneak peak at the dry century ahead.

James Benkie knows just how hard this year has been for Alberta growers. He has a farm himself, of course, but he also meets with farmers every day through the Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC), the provincial agency responsible for crop insurance. Benkie is a senior area adjuster for AFSC, meaning he supervises the inspectors in his region who are responsible for taking care of crop insurance claims. Benkie says that the dry conditions this season mean early mornings and late nights are a fact of life for him at the moment.

"I'm out at 5 or 6 am for sure," he explains. "That's the way it goes. A lot of our guys, we just work as long as we can. We've got to get things done. It never ends."

Benkie says he visits clients from Stony Plain to Westlock to Barrhead and back, and depends on building good relationships with them. "Adjustors are sort of the face of AFSC," he explains.

The 135 adjusters around the province are the front line of an agency that pro-



HEY, MR. RAIN >> Low levels of moisture this season have left fields parched and farmers desperate // jpractor

vides the insurance that many farmers are now depending on to make it through the year.

Different agencies offer different kinds of farm insurance, but the basic principle remains the same: growers pay insurance premiums to protect them from risks like hail damage and long rain-free periods that can stunt or destroy crops.

"Crop insurance isn't there for them to get rich," explains Benkie. "If it covers your costs, you're doing good."

"They take it as a risk management tool," he continues, "but no one wants to see us on their farm. They want a bumper crop." In Alberta, he notes, 73 percent of all growers buy coverage from AFSC, and more get coverage from some other firm.

Since most clients don't see much of AFSC until it's time for an adjuster to come out to assess their crops and eligibility for insurance claims, he adds, people tend to blame them for a lot. He shrugs off the description of counsellor, but admits that he does often play the role of sounding board for frustrated farmers.

One client he visited this year, for example, wanted to get permission to harvest her poorly growing oats for winter livestock feed, or silage. He says she started laying into him about the hours it took to download documents to verify her cows' ages, and how sick she was of paperwork. Benkie's used to this kind of venting, he says, but adds that this year is something altogether different.

"We're seeing more levels of stress than we've ever seen," he laments.

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development publishes regular updates on how

crops around the province are doing and how growers are responding. This summer's crop reports have been grim. Many areas of the province had received less than half their usual precipitation by June and some canola growers were saying their fields were still filled with seeds, with nothing even growing yet.

This month, there's been enough moisture to at least get those seeds germinating, but for many farmers the moisture has simply come too late.

AFSC's response to this year's drought, though, gives a more poignant view of the scale of the crisis than the dry prose contained in those crop reports.

Benkie explains that it's usually extremely rare in his region for growers to claim what's called a "zero yield" on their crop. That means it hasn't grown enough to even pay for the gas required to harvest the crop.

Before June 22, says Benkie, they had only received about a dozen zero-yield claims for livestock forage—the kind of situation Jerry Kitt's farm is in, with barely anything in the fields for the livestock to eat, let alone save for the winter. That's when AFSC announced the next stage of coverage, letting growers put those crops to other uses without the penalties they'd typically pay earlier in the year. The next Monday, he said, they had received about 1400 claims.

That overwhelming demand helps explain why last month AFSC also announced it was doing something it had never done before. It sounded dull, but amounted to the infamous "X" that nurses

used to draw on soldier's foreheads to declare them beyond saving. It's called an average area yield assessment, and it has a lot to do with why 16 of the 24 adjusters under Benkie's supervision have now been sent out of his region.

What it means, essentially, is that AFSC is so stretched this summer that not only has it sent adjusters like Benkie's to even drier parts of the province, it's also declared entire areas of Alberta so dry it doesn't see the need to send scarce adjusters out to every single farm. If you live in a township with severe enough crop losses this year, you can just phone it in.

The last year with a drought this bad was 2002, and, according to one study, not only can we expect more intense droughts ahead, we're overdue for a period of droughts that could last decades.

Dave Stauchyn, a geography professor at University of Regina, recently told the *Globe and Mail* that it's impossible to say with any certainty that this year's events, or 2002's, are directly caused by global warming, but they are, he added, "entirely consistent with global climate change predictions."

Stauchyn is the head researcher of the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative (PARC), which examines past and present climate data to predict likely scenarios for the Prairie region. A recent PARC report said that every few centuries this part of the world has gone through alternating cycles of intense, long-term drought, then moisture. Given the historical record, the study showed, we seem to be overdue for a period of extended drought. On top of that, climate change is going to make all

of the Prairie provinces hotter, and make both severe droughts and floods more common events.

Justine Klaver-Kibria was the lead researcher on a recent study into the health impacts of drought in the Prairies. She says that economic stressors like those brought on by struggling crops are a serious contributor to mental health issues for farmers, and have serious ripple effects across their families and communities.

"Farmers are a proud group of people, like any group of people," she says. "They're proud of what they do. They don't want to rely on outside help just to survive."

So even when government assistance does come though, Klaver-Kibria says being forced to live off insurance cheques is stressful, even though it relieves some of the economic stress associated with a failed crop.

Klaver-Kibria says the study found that stress over bad weather and even filling in government forms are among the factors that can push farmers to depression and even suicide. Given that the impacts can be life-and-death situations she's frustrated at how segregated information can be between environmental and health issues and the agencies that deal with them.

"Research, governments are very departmentalized. Microbiology stays within microbiology, health stays within health, but there's no connection between them all," she says. "I recently went through the Government of Alberta's website, and the department of Health and Wellness doesn't even really mention climate change. And yet I would think their biggest cost over time is going to be the health effects of it. They haven't made that leap."

Given Klaver-Kibria's background, it's not surprising she thinks making these kind of links is important. Coming from a biology background she began integrating health aspects into her degree, she says, because she was compelled by the very wide-angle perspective of looking at human and ecosystem health.

"The number one thing is talking to other departments, because we're all connected," she stresses. "From an ecosystem health perspective, we're all connected."

More and more counties around Alberta have declared drought disasters, waiting for help to arrive. But in the coming decades, years like this one are going to be coming more often. Addressing the long-term causes and effects of a drier climate is going to take more than temporary relief programs and crop insurance for farmers. It's going to require making links between what happens to the land, the people on it and the role we're all playing in shaping our climate. ▽

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Issues

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Still scraping off the topsoil

Policy requiring value-added processing would make sense

RICARDO ACUÑA

// UALBERTA.CA/PARKLAND

Does anyone remember Ed Stelmach's promise, made when he was running for the leadership of the provincial Conservatives, to maximize the amount of value that was being added to our resources before they left the province? What about his promise when the bottom fell out of the economy to get Albertans working in good jobs again as quickly as possible? Well if anybody remembers these pledges, it certainly isn't Ed Stelmach.

During his leadership campaign in 2006, Mr. Stelmach stated repeatedly that it was unacceptable to have so much bitumen leaving Alberta unprocessed. In fact, he was very fond of saying during the campaign that exporting raw bitumen was like scraping the topsoil off of farmland and selling it.

After becoming premier he set a goal for his government of having 72 percent of Alberta's bitumen processed in-province rather than abroad. His government, however, then proceeded to remain absolutely silent during the hearings to approve three new pipelines specifically designed to carry raw

bitumen out of the province for upgrading and refining down in the United States.

Suncor announced last week that work on its Voyageur upgrader, which was stalled when the market collapsed earlier this year, would not proceed in the near future. Suncor is one of the companies that has traditionally upgraded all its mined bitumen here in Alberta, however the shelving of the Voyageur project—which was anticipated to be able to handle 200 000 barrels per day of bitumen—means that Suncor will soon be producing more bitumen than it can process here.

The company, it seems, is fine with that. Company CEO Rick George cited increased demand from the US and rising heavy oil prices as good reasons for Suncor to increase bitumen production significantly, even if it does not have the capacity to upgrade it here. He also took the opportunity to announce that work will now continue on the construction of the company's previously stalled Firebag 3 tar sands project, which will even further increase the amount of bitumen being produced and exported for upgrading out of province.

In all of this, and despite his previous

commitments to value-added production in Alberta, Premier Stelmach has not said a word. Even though the percentage of bitumen being upgraded in-province is actually now going in the opposite direction of what the government has promised, there have not been any moves to either legislate value-added processing (as in a law, as suggested by some, that if it's mined here it should be processed here) or to suggest to Suncor that there will be no approval of Firebag 3 if the company doesn't also proceed with Voyageur.

The argument in favour of building more upgrading capacity in Alberta is fairly simple and straightforward: if we are going to be incurring the environmental and social destruction that comes with the mining of bitumen (and for the foreseeable future we will be), then we should at least ensure that we are maximizing the benefits that we are getting from the resource. In particular, we should be pushing for the well-paid long-term jobs that come with upgraders and refineries and for the increased revenue that upgraded bitumen brings with it.

That is not to say that upgraders and refineries are all good and benign. In fact,

their negative impact on land, water supply and air quality is significant. Some of those concerns can surely be dealt with by imposing stricter controls which will actually regulate and reduce the environmental footprint of these plants. The provincial government loves to boast about Alberta being a world leader, and this is one area where the government could insist that all upgraders in the province be best in class or better in terms of their environmental footprint. Certainly if this is the only option available to the industry they could come up with the necessary technology to make it happen.

The flipside of the equation, of course, is that in the global picture the impact of an upgrader is the same whether it's built in Alberta's industrial heartland or in the southern United States. It seems entirely contrary to principles of social and environmental justice to stand up and say, "We don't want these things in our backyard, but we're happy to see them built elsewhere." For environmentalists and social justice activists alike, if the goal is to begin ramping down the tar sands for the sake of moving to green and sustainable energy sources, fighting to keep upgraders out of Alberta will not make one lick of difference. As Suncor CEO Rick George made clear in his announcement, as long as there is demand tar sands production will continue to increase—regardless of where it is being upgraded and refined.

In reality, a policy of forcing the upgrading and refining of all Alberta bitumen in Alberta would provide the provincial government with significantly more control about how much bitumen gets mined and what is done with it. In fact, if the government were to legislate this today the result would be an immediate reduction in production in the neighbourhood of 40 percent or more, because the capacity to upgrade more than that simply does not exist today in Alberta. It would also force industry to move resources away from building tar sands expansions and toward increasing upgrading capacity. That, if combined with strict new environmental guidelines and regulations for the building and operation of any new upgraders, would be a significant start in a transition to a greener more sustainable economic policy in Alberta.

Ultimately, whether you are an activist advocating the eventual shutdown of the tar sands, or a pro-industry advocate looking for long-term jobs and maximum economic benefit, a policy requiring that all Alberta bitumen be processed in-province is a positive start. Now, if only we had a premier who was elected on a platform of doing just that, we would be set. **V**

Ricardo Acuña is executive director of the Parkland Institute, a non-partisan public policy research institute housed at the University of Alberta.

COMMENT >> INTERNATIONAL

Turn the page

Death of last First World War combatant an opportunity to recognize the folly of war

Two years ago this month, there were 24 left. Now they are all gone, and there is nobody alive who fought in the First World War. Well, there is still Jack Babcock, who joined the Royal Canadian Regiment in 1917 but got no closer to the fighting than England, and American veteran Frank Buckles, who drove an ambulance in France as a 17-year-old in 1918. But the last real combatant, Harry Patch, who was wounded at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917, died on Saturday.

Harry Patch was an apprentice plumber when he was conscripted in 1916, and 19 years old when he arrived at the Western Front in 1917. He lasted four months before a German shell burst overhead, killing three close friends and wounding him in the groin. He was evacuated to England, and never saw the war again.

He married in 1918, had children, followed his trade of plumbing and served as a volunteer fireman during the bombing raids on

Bristol during the Second World War. He died on Saturday, at the age of 111. So what have Harry Patch of Somerset and his 60 million comrades (for it no longer matters which side they were on) left behind for us?

One thing they would have been quite clear about: we can't do this any more. In the First World War we crossed a threshold. All the advances in science and technology came together and created a kind of industrialized warfare that is simply unsustainable in human terms. It consumes soldiers, civilians, whole cities at a rate that endangers civilization itself. All the technological innovations that have been added since the First World War—armoured divisions, bomber fleets, nuclear weapons—only deepen the lesson, they don't change it. Human beings have fought wars since we were all hunter-gatherers, and those who were good at it tended to prosper. Now, if you are really good at war, you will be destroyed.

Europe is just where industrialized total

war first appeared. You can send expeditionary forces into the weaker parts of what we used to call the Third World and bash them to your heart's content, but if you

and fitting it is to die for one's country." But we don't believe that lie any more.

Wilfred Owen was killed crossing the Sambre canal a week before the war ended.

It's almost a century now since anybody but fascists and fools saw war as glorious. The government may tell us that our "glorious dead" have "fallen," but we know that they were only teenagers, and that they died in agony and lost all the rest of their lives.

get into a serious fight with another fully industrialized country, you will be both be destroyed. (This is a lesson that emerging industrial countries like India, China and Brazil can learn cheaply from history, or very expensively from experience.)

What else did the 60 million leave us? Inscribed on the wall of the chapel at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where I taught "war studies" as a much younger man, is the first line of Horace's poem, "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori": "How sweet

He never got any older than 25, but he put the wisdom that the millions bought with their lives into his poem "Dulce et decorum est." It's about a poison gas attack, and the last lines run: "If you could hear ... the blood come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs ... My friend, you would not tell with such high zest to children ardent for some desperate glory, the old lie: Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

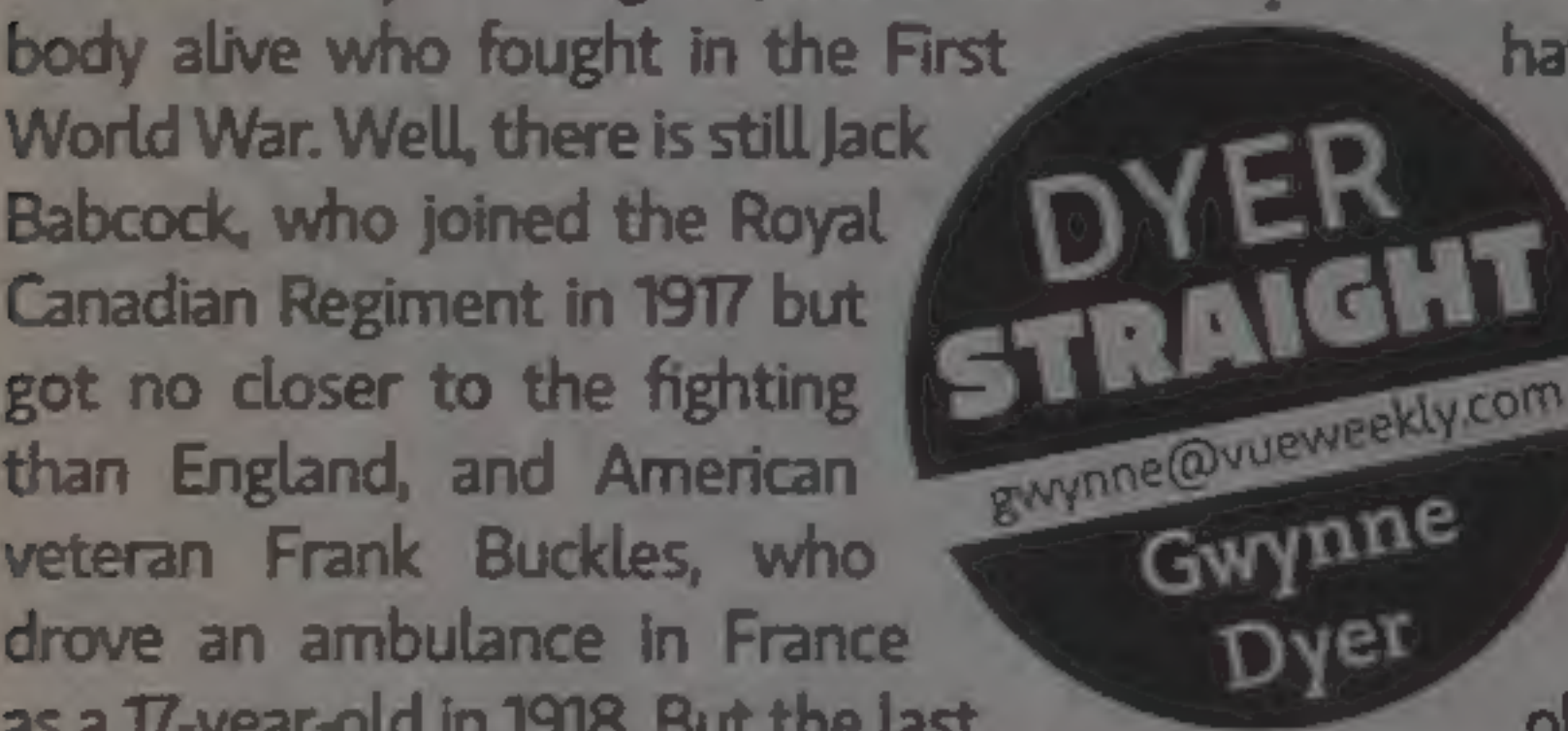
It's almost a century now since anybody but fascists and fools saw war as glori-

ous. The government may tell us that our "glorious dead" have "fallen," but we know that they were only teenagers, and that they died in agony and lost all the rest of their lives. Sometimes we even worry about the fact that we have sent them to kill people for us.

In 1917, during the Third Battle of Ypres, Harry Patch was manning his machine-gun when a German got close enough that he looked like a real person—and suddenly Harry realized that he didn't want to kill him. Shouldn't kill him, in fact. He shot the German in the shoulder, which made him drop his rifle, but he kept coming.

So Harry shot him again, first above the knee and then in the ankle. God knows if the German survived all this, but at least Harry was trying. So are the rest of us. Most of the time. **V**

*Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in *Vue Weekly*.*



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Bad, but less bad than thought

Environmental group disputes new oilsands emissions report

SAMANTHA POWER
// SAMANTHA@VUEWEEKLY.COM

A new report funded by the Alberta government has concluded the environmental impact of the oilsands isn't as bad as previously thought, but environmental advocates say they're not buying the results.

The Alberta Energy Research Institute (AERI) released last week a report detailing the "well to wheel" CO₂ emissions associated with oil extracted from the oilsands. The report, *A Life-Cycle Analysis of North American and Imported Crude Oils*, focused on the direct emissions from oilsands production and compared the pathways of production to other states, including Mexico, Venezuela and Nigeria. The report was based on two independent studies carried out over the past year by a pair of consulting firms commissioned by the government-funded AERI.

They found that direct emissions from the oilsands are about 10 percent higher than direct emissions from other crudes refined in the US, and comparable if power cogeneration is taken into account. Previous estimates had put the difference as high as 40 percent.

The report, however, did not consider indirect greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from processes such as the natural gas required to extract bitumen. But AERI Pro-

gram Director Surindar Singh says the report had to set limits somewhere.

"You could go to the steel you need for production, to the vehicles to transport, emissions could go all the way to the iron ore you require, ad infinitum," he says. "You have to establish a starting and an end point and this report really comes from a need to do a scientific analysis on a comparative basis because numbers can be changed on a number of factors."

But Marlo Reynolds, the executive director of the environmental group the Pembina Institute, says the findings in the report aren't anything new.

"This report still shows the tar sands are 10 percent worse than conventional oil, and it included some of the worst polluters [in its comparison]," he says. "In our view it only confirms the need to clean up the oilsands."

Reynolds says that to move Alberta forward environmentally we should be doing research which compares oilsands emissions to emerging, more environmentally friendly technologies and sources of energy.

"It would have been more balanced against better comparisons," he argues. "The bottom line is that if you are comparing yourself to the dirtiest producers that's not good news. Right now we are just comparing the worst out there to look better than what we are."

While the government has been holding up the report as a positive for the oilsands, Reynolds argues that it actually just confirms the problems groups like Pembina have been pointing to for years.

"This report only confirms the disastrous environmental footprint of the oilsands and that we have a way to go to reduce its environmental footprint," he says. "It's the key reason Canada has not met its international emissions reductions targets."

With those international emissions targets growing in importance, Reynolds believes international scrutiny of the oilsands was likely a factor in the creation of this report.

"The world is pushing for better standards. Canada may only be contributing to global GHG emissions at a rate of two to three percent, but that puts us seventh in the world," he says. "We can show leadership by cleaning up the tar sands."

While Singh admits a key issue in creating the report was California's low-carbon fuel standards, it was necessary to get a firm handle on the emissions associated with the oilsands, which the report was able to do.

"Two different studies showed that the oilsands GHG outputs were 14 – 40 percent higher than conventional oil," Singh says. "That's a discrepancy and we wanted to get a realistic understanding of the numbers." ▽

ALT HEALTH >> POWER LINES

What they'll say ...

Of course those who want to put the high-voltage power line through west Edmonton are going to hear the concerns of nearby residents, and of course they're going to, after they've heard those concerns, repeat assurances that there's no evidence of reason to worry and then go ahead and do what they want to do.

I hope I'm wrong, but what I expect they'll do is create so much doubt about potential risks that those who are still uneasy will begin to believe they're being paranoid. They'll assert that there is no compelling evidence of significant health hazards associated with power lines, that the science has been conclusively negative and there's nothing to worry about. They'll say that where a link has been found, it was a poorly designed study. Or things like, well, there was an association here, or there, but we don't know that it wasn't just coincidental.

They'll say all that just like they say there is no proven link between oil industry pollution and cancer clusters, or nuclear power plants and cancer clusters, or between mercury in vaccines and autism even though it is a matter of well-known fact that mercury is a potent neurotoxin. Or like they used to say there was no proven link between the 1976 swine flu vaccine and Guillain Barre, or between smoking and cancer.

They'll cite the consensus of major health organizations like Health Canada, and overlook their history of negotiating in favour of industry, and firing scientists who prefer precaution to good industry relations.

They'll say it's silly to be fearful, even though five years ago a massive US study found children under the age of 15 living within 100 metres of high-voltage power lines have close to twice the risk of developing leukemia, and even though a BC study four years ago yielded similarly damning results, and even though an Australian study two years ago found a 300 percent increased cancer risk.

They'll say there's nothing to fear, even though countless studies have given us reason to fear, and even though the Canadian Cancer Society doesn't recommend parents let children play under power lines. But what's a parent to do when the high voltage power lines just happen to be going up in their backyard and property values are going down, and the job is uncertain and a move is out of the question?

They'll defend the power-line plans even though a major report prepared by 14 scientists and public health experts in 2007—the BioInitiative Working Group—for the purpose of doing a comprehensive assessment of the science on health impacts of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) concluded it is clear that the existing

public safety standards limiting these radiation levels in nearly every country of the world look to be thousands of times too lenient. Changes are needed."

"There may be no lower limit at which exposures do not affect us," they write. "It is time that planning for new power lines and for new homes, schools and other habitable spaces around them is done with routine provision for low-ELF [extremely low frequency] environments." The group's review of the science found that exposure to EMR has been linked not only to childhood leukemia, but to a very long list of health problems.

But when it comes to industry, it's innocent until proven guilty, necessary to demonstrate a consistent and significant causal relationship, and until then, it's all alarmist and unsubstantiated fear-mongering. And when it comes to matters of natural health therapies it's the opposite—they're ineffective and dangerous until proven 100 percent safe and effective beyond a shadow of doubt.

In the end, while we debate the precautionary principle and talk about conclusive science and which risks are worth taking and which aren't, we have the heartbreaking realities of the canaries in the mine, the small percentage that sometimes can't prove causation, but have lost someone to leukemia since their move to a high-voltage power-line neighbourhood. Stories that, if we were smart, we would actually listen to and validate rather than dismiss as coincidental. ▽



public art

CALL TO ARTISTS: REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS SOUTHWEST COMMUNIT RECREATION CENTRE

There are two public art opportunities at the Southwest Community Recreation Centre. Applicants are welcome to submit an application to either or both opportunities, however a separate application is required for each opportunity.

PROJECT #1: An exterior commission, which can be discreet or integrated to the building and site locations.

Budget: \$400,000 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Thursday, September 10th, 2009

PROJECT #2: An interior commission, which can be discreet or integrated to the building and site locations, that includes a community collaboration component in the development or production of the artwork.

Budget: \$66,100 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Thursday, September 10th 2009

CALL TO ARTISTS: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS WHITEMUD PARK TRAILHEAD BUILDING

Budget: \$23,700 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Monday, September 7th, 2009

CALL TO ARTISTS: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS LEWIS FARMS & MEADOWS TRANSIT CENTRES

The commission will be awarded to one artist to provide two public artworks, one for each transit centre: Lewis Farms Transit Centre and Meadows Transit Centre.

Budget: \$50,560 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Tuesday, September 8th, 2009

CALL TO ARTISTS: REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS NORTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY RECREATIONS CENTRE & FIELD HOUSE

There are two public art opportunities at the North Central Community Recreation Centre & Field House. Applicants are welcome to submit an application to either or both opportunities, however a separate application is required for each opportunity.

PROJECT #1: An exterior commission, which can be discreet or integrated to the building and site locations.

Budget: \$504,000 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Thursday, September 10th, 2009

PROJECT #2: An interior commission, which can be discreet or integrated to the building and site locations.

Budget: \$41,000 CAD (maximum, all inclusive)
Deadline: 4:30 pm on Thursday, September 10th 2009

All above public art competition, open to all Canadian and international visual artists, is held in accordance with the City of Edmonton policy "Percent for Art to Provide and Encourage Art in Public Areas" (C458B).

Installation of all above public art projects slated for the fall of 2010.

Download RFQs and RFPs at
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TOP 10 RINGTONES

- 1 The Black Eyed Peas
Boom Boom Pow
- 2 Pitbull
I Know You Want Me (Calle Ocho)
- 3 Kid Cudi
Day 'N' Nite
- 4 Soulja Boy Tell'em
Kiss Me Thru The Phone
- 5 Eminem
Crack A Bottle feat. Dr. Dre and 50 Cent
- 6 Flo Rida
Right Round feat. Ke\$ha
- 7 Sean Kingston
Fire Burning
- 8 Jamie Foxx
Blame It feat. T-Pain
- 9 Eminem
We Made You
- 10 Jeremih
Birthday Sex

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ARTIST: **CLASSIFIED**

GAMES >> EARTHBOUND

Game over, player one

Zenko runs out of quarters, says goodbye to Infinite Lives

[SPOILER ALERT: This is the final installment of Infinite Lives.]

I started writing about games in 1998, entirely by accident. Working as a proof-reader at the *Edmonton Journal*, one evening I spied a brightly coloured packet on the entertainment editor's desk. It was promotional material from Nintendo, flogging the upcoming North American launch of *Pokemon*, nestled in the Oblivion Pile along with the direct-to-DVD thrillers and dinner-theatre press releases. Having informants just returned from Japan with tales of that entire nation eaten alive by the adorable technicolor mutants, I knew this was going to be A Thing and that some newspaper had to be first to go big with it.

"Wayne," I said to the editor, "this is going to be A Thing. We should go big with it."

He was skeptical, and I pitched hard. Eventually, I had to go all the way up through the managing editor and beyond before they gave the go-ahead to a feature, probably just to get this kid shouting, "Lineups! Larceny! Epileptic seizures!" out of their quiet beige offices. And so "Here Comes *Pokemon*," my first broadsheet byline, dropped on the front page of that Friday's section. By Tuesday parents, papers and cable networks across the continent were WTFing about this insane new kiddie fad from the mys-

terious East. I looked real smart and was given a column (I had to borrow money to get a PlayStation from the pawnshop); a few years later I expanded my little empire into this newspaper, where I could freely use the curse-words that form the fiery heart of the videogaming vernacular.

Games journalism in the last decade-and-a-bit has grown along with games themselves, moving from a pure product-review stance (featuring that weird convention, the "rent or buy" recommendation) and into something more like art criticism; as games have developed a canon and a critical vocabulary, as the industry has continued to grow its share of the world's entertainment dollar (or yen, or peso, or drachma) by double digits every year, as the unstoppable mathematics of time and demographics have implacably moved the median age of the video-game player into rough congruence with the median age of the population as a whole, games writers have been increasingly able to talk about videogames not as toys and novelties but as artworks existing within a tradition, to talk about games as social spaces, to discuss game culture as a legitimate sphere with real meaning that extends offscreen.

But still, in the final accounting, a lot of what we do boils down to a single exhortation; that is, as veteran designer/

thinker Greg Costikyan has titled his excellent blog, "Play this thing!" So here I go, one last time ...

If you've never played *Earthbound*, Shigesato Itoi's surreal, iconoclastic 1995 Super Nintendo RPG, you've been missing out. I know this because I myself have been missing out; only in this past weekend did I get around to playing it, via the sweet magic of emulation.

I know! A games critic who hasn't played *Earthbound* is like one of those people who try to talk to you about movies and they've never seen *Ghostbusters*. *Earthbound* is not a perfect game (it's close), but it perfectly expresses everything I've ever figured games should be about.

It comes down to details and differentiation. *Earthbound's* basic plot—young boy turns out to be some kind of chosen one, must have fantastic adventures and save the world—is a stock chassis; everything beyond that is an exercise in taking conventions, thinking about them consciously and deploying them without cliché. From its pastel colour palette, including the use of charcoal rather than black for the linework in its cheerfully cartoonish backgrounds and sprites, through the beeps and boops of the menu sound effects, everything in *Earthbound*—even at 15 years old, and games age in dog-years—feels fresh and new and above all intentional. Nothing in *Earthbound* is done by rote or reflex.

As an example, there's no "death" in *Earthbound*. Not just for your little-kid characters, who respawn by sheer force of will should the perils of the trail overwhelm them, but for the various weird foes they'll face. Enemies go away, but they don't die. Far from being a G-rated pussification of the "realities" of mortal combat, this lack of death serves to deepen, enrich and characterize the game world. In most games, unconsciously stuck as they are in the metaphor of violence, all enemies would be "killed," or perhaps simply "defeated"; in *Earthbound*, they "stop moving" (in the case of diabolically animated plants), "become tame" (rogue animals) or "return to normal" (freakified humans)—all inverse expressions of the ways in which they have been made aberrant and hostile. Your dude in *Earthbound* isn't a killer; he's a force of order, a healer, a righter of wrongness. It feels good. It feels intelligent.

Earthbound represents everything I've looked for, longed for and occasionally despaired of in games: a refutation of reflex, a suspicion of cliché, a conscious artistic will taking everything from menu screens to dialogue and putting it all in the service of the creation of new experience. It's a wonderfully blessed serendipity that this happened to be the last game I played before wrapping up this column; pick it up however you can—eBay, pawnshop, download—and play, and understand.

Good morning, friends. May your thumbs callous before they blister, may your saves be uncorrupted, may all your drops be Epic. ♡

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NORTHWEST

EASTSIDE

One man's garbage ...

CHELSEA BLAIR
// CHELSEA@VUEWEEKLY.COM

As residents of Toronto have learned over the course of an even-more-stinky-than-usual month in the centre of the universe, contemporary urban living produces a lot of garbage. With Edmonton's Clover Bar Sanitary Landfill slated to finally reach capacity in August after more than 30 years in operation, the city is moving ahead with its latest step to deal more effectively with the mountains of garbage produced by Edmontonians.

Enerkem GreenField Alberta Biofuels (EGAB), a partnership between two Canadian-based alternative-fuel developers, has signed a 25-year contract with the city to construct a gasification plant which will turn municipal solid waste (MSW) into biofuels. The demonstration project was given the final go-ahead in May after it passed the environmental regulatory procedures directed by Alberta Environment and construction is slated to begin later this year.

While the majority of municipal solid waste, which includes waste from households, commercial operations, light industry and construction projects, is already kept out of landfills through a combination of diversion by composting and recycling, turning garbage into fuel will allow the city to significantly reduce the amount of garbage it needs to ship to the new landfill in Ryley once Clover Bar is shuttered.

"The city's extensive recycling and composting programs capture practically all recoverable organics and recyclables," says Kevin Donnan, a spokesperson from the Alberta Energy Research Institute (AERI), one of the government partners involved in the venture. He says that the remainder of the city's garbage is ideally suited to be turned into biofuels rather than sent to be landfilled.

"What is left as a MSW residue from the composting plant and material recovery facility have two outstanding features: it has a high calorific value, and it takes up a disproportionate volume of scarce landfill space due to its low density."

This residue from the 250 000 tonnes of waste and recyclables collected each year in the city is the material that will instead be used to create biofuels. The city has agreed to supply the facility with 100 000 tonnes of MSW per year, which accounts for 40 percent of Edmonton's total residential waste stream, and will be turned into 36 - 40 million litres of biofuel, first in the form of methanol and later ethanol.

Connie Boyce, the director of community relations with the city's waste management branch, says that the net cost of turning waste into biofuels, estimated at \$66 per tonne, will be less than the cost of sending it to the city's new landfill in Ryley.

She adds that the city will also receive greenhouse gas emissions reductions credits for the project. If the facility performs as expected the biofuels it produces will reduce emissions by six million tonnes over 25 years, the equivalent effect of removing roughly 12 000 cars from the road annually.

Dr. Daryl McCartney, a professor and the associate head of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Alberta, says that the project, which will be the world's first industrial scale municipal waste-to-ethanol facility, will go a long way in determining the feasibility of turning otherwise-hard-to-deal-with waste into fuel.

"There are many materials left in the waste stream that cannot be reused or recycled in any other practical way, so using these waste materials is an amazing initiative providing technical leadership on an international scale," he says. "Technical or economic problems may cause the technology to be proven unviable, but we won't know unless we try."

The biofuels facility will cost around \$70 million and will be funded in part by the Government of Alberta through the AERI and the City of Edmonton. A \$9-million research facility is also planned. Construction on the facility, which will be located just east of the city at the Edmonton Waste Management Centre, will be completed by the end of 2010. ▽

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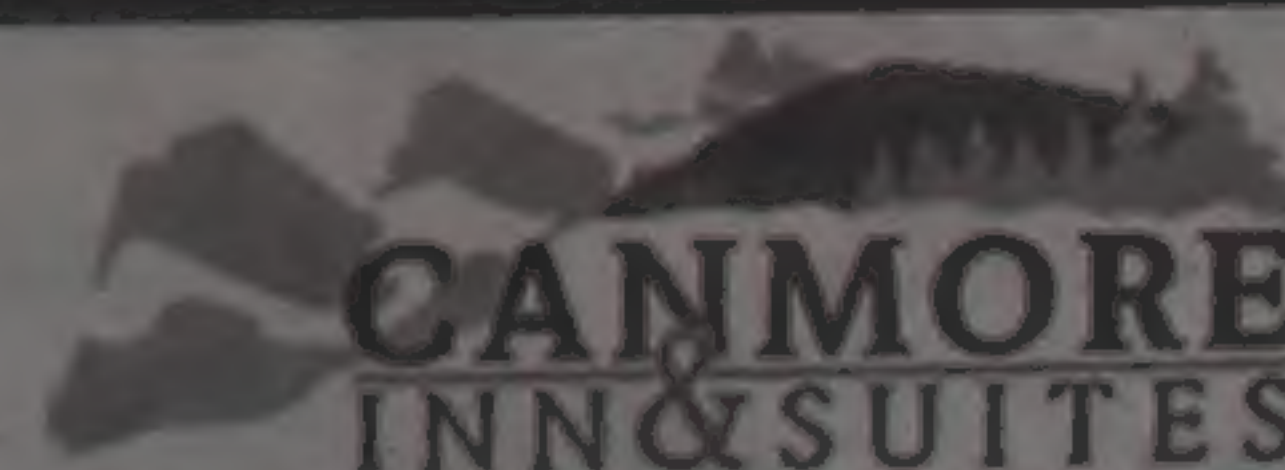
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DISH

DISH

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BEER

Flavour of the island

What's the deal with lime-flavoured beer?

I promised myself I wouldn't write about it. I told myself it didn't deserve it, that beer fans knew enough for themselves.

But (sigh) I must.

I am, of course, referring to the recent rash of "lime beers" coming on the market, headed up by Bud Light Lime. When Bud Light Lime first came out I dutifully tried it and immediately struck it off my review list. It was immediately obvious to me that it was AB-Inbev's latest marketing ploy for the busy summer beer season. They don't need my help marketing their beer, and so off the list it went.

But then two things put it back on the list. In the weeks following its release, Bud Light Lime smashed sales records across the country. It didn't just sell well; it flew off the shelves. In Alberta, in Ontario, everywhere—liquor stores can't keep it in stock. That's interesting.

Then the second thing happened. Other breweries rushed out their copycat beer—first New Brunswick's Moosehead put out a Light Lime beer. Russell Brewing in BC came along with its own version. Neither is available here. Then Big Rock released Lime Light Lager and it, too, flew off the shelves.

This is too big to ignore. And I am forced to tell the story. So, let's go back to the beginning. Last spring the giant AB-Inbev released Bud Light Lime in the US market as a competitor for Corona, but with the citrus quality already in the beer. It was a huge hit among Americans. Within months, Canadian border crossing agents were reporting Canadians bringing back carloads of the stuff.

Then a group of Canadians launched a Facebook campaign to lobby AB-Inbev to release it in Canada. Apparently the power of social networking did its job. Labatt's (the Canadian arm of AB-Inbev) put it out in May.

Then the mad rush for the beer began. Liquor stores across the province report that as fast as their staff could place it on the shelves, eager consumers would pick it up. AB-Inbev did all this without a penny in mainstream advertising. The buzz came from Internet networking and word of mouth. Bud Light Lime, according to Labatt's, was planned to be their single largest new product release by volume, but sales more than doubled even those heady expectations.

In June Big Rock released their version, and the same thing happened. The beer flew off the shelves. In many respects, Big Rock lucked out, as their beer hit the shelves at the same time Bud Light Lime ran out, making it the natural plan-B.

So what is going on? The beers themselves are rather straightforward. Light, low-alcohol lagers with lime accent. In my tasting, the Bud Light Lime offered a strong, attractive lime aroma, some moderate lime flavour and very little beer, which was watery and seemed secondary in the whole experience.

The Big Rock version has less lime and more beer, relatively speaking. The lime aroma and flavour are more subtle, and the base beer is a standard light lager with some grainy barley notes. The Big Rock version has more of interplay between the lime and the beer, making it

more interesting, but less lime-ful.

It can't be the beers creating this frenzy; they're just not that interesting. I personally think it is a combination of two factors coming together to create a buzz not normally seen in the beer world. First, beer is undergoing an image makeover. In the last few years consumers have been warming up to the idea that beer is not just fizzy, yellow water. This has given brewers room to stretch their legs and try hoppier, maltier or stranger beers, including beers with fruit. Today the idea of a lime beer does not meet the same degree of scepticism as it would a few years ago.

Second, lime is the new "thing." Mojitos are all the rage. Lime coolers have appeared. Even tortilla chips are being coated in lime. I think people like lime's playful mixture of sweet, sour and citrusy refreshment. If you like lime in your rum why not in your beer?

Supporting this theory is that early market results suggest the core market for lime beer is cooler drinkers and "marginal" beer drinkers—those people who aren't huge fans of beer but are still looking for something they might enjoy.

This might explain why lime beer personally leaves me cold, but others flock to it. Clearly I am not the target market for this particular beer.

Will the lime beer phenomenon last? It is too early to tell, but I am reminded of past "innovations" such as low-carb beer, ice beer, and dry beer. All were big news when first released but within a couple of years quietly faded from view, never to be revived. Ultimately, time will tell. Either way, I suspect this is the last I speak of lime beer. **V**





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Turning \$800 into a million-dollar breakfast



THE RESTAURANT'S BEEN OPEN 30 YEARS >> And they've never had a fight // Jan Hostyn

JAN HOSTYN

// JAN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Ernie Feuchter, the Ernie half of Barb and Ernie's, is what you would call animated, even if some people might use a different term. "I have a big mouth," Feuchter bluntly declares, "but in a good way."

That self-professed "big mouth" becomes particularly energized when the subject of breakfast comes up. Feuchter's arms begin to wave faster and a huge grin engulfs his face. "For the last 10 years, we've been known for having the number one breakfast

in Edmonton." As proof, I was treated to a quick tour showcasing all the certificates and plaques the restaurant has been awarded over the years.

"When we first opened, we needed to get people in here, and we needed them to say positive things about the restaurant. So we served hotcakes—hotcakes like you've never seen before." Feuchter's arms paused briefly to demonstrate the size of those hotcakes—wider than a dinner plate and a good eight inches high. "We made a contest out of it. Whoever could finish that huge stack got them on the house."

Add 25 cents for a cup of coffee,

along with free refills, and Barb & Ernie's was well on its way to making a name for itself.

Feuchter was born in Germany, and he grew up cooking. His parents both worked, and they expected the kids to pitch in. His brother got house-cleaning duty and Feuchter cooked. "I was born a cook, and I'll die a cook. It's really the only thing I can do. If I had to [nail] something in the wall, I would surely hit my hand."

His official cooking training started when he was 14. He entered trade school and spent the next four years of his life studying to become a chef. When he was finished, at only 18 years old, it was with the admirable ranking of third out of 180 students. "But I still think I should have been number one."

Barb completed the other half of the Barb & Ernie team when she was just 15, only a year younger than Feuchter, and they've been together ever since. It's a good thing, too; Feuchter credits his wife with enabling him to immigrate to Canada. "Back then, there was a point system in place in order to immigrate to Canada. As a chef I didn't qualify, but Barb did. She was a draft person, and that was something Canada needed. I got to come along as her husband."

Feuchter held down a few executive chef positions, both in Edmonton and Vancouver, before Barb convinced him to make Edmonton home.

"I came back to Edmonton after being the executive chef at Charlie Brown's in Vancouver feeling like the whole world was in my hands. I was young and kind of snotty."

At the time, he was running two restau-

rants in Sherwood Park, but he wanted more out of his career. So the hunt began, and eventually he found what is now Barb & Ernie's. "Back then it was called Bill's Restaurant, and it had a pool hall where the dining room is now. It was rundown and filthy, but it was cheap." And it was on one of the busiest streets in Edmonton.

But Feuchter still didn't have the money for it. Or any money, for that matter. "I made money, but I spent it all. I was young." Luckily, there was a postal strike going on and, back then, you didn't have to pay your bills during the strike. You could wait until it was over. So he took the \$800 that was actually supposed to go towards his bills and, to make a long story short, used it to buy the restaurant. "I've always looked at it as if I paid \$800 for this place."

Before they could even think about opening their own restaurant, some major renovations had to be done, so out went the pool hall and in went a new dining room. "My wife and I built this little room with our own hands."

They opened and focused on breakfast—and those hotcakes.

That was over 30 years ago, and although they are now open for dinner as well, breakfast is still a big deal at Barb & Ernie's. On weekends there's usually a line-up from about 10 am until 2 or 3 in the afternoon. And while the hotcakes are still popular—though no longer free if you manage to down them all—the menu has expanded significantly.

"For the first 10 years we served typical breakfast food. Then we started closing for one month every summer and we travelled. Whenever we ate something

extraordinary, we either got the recipe or I figured out what was in it. Once we got home, we'd put it on our menu." Feuchter says the menu now has dishes on it from all over the world, including Hungary, Switzerland and even Africa.

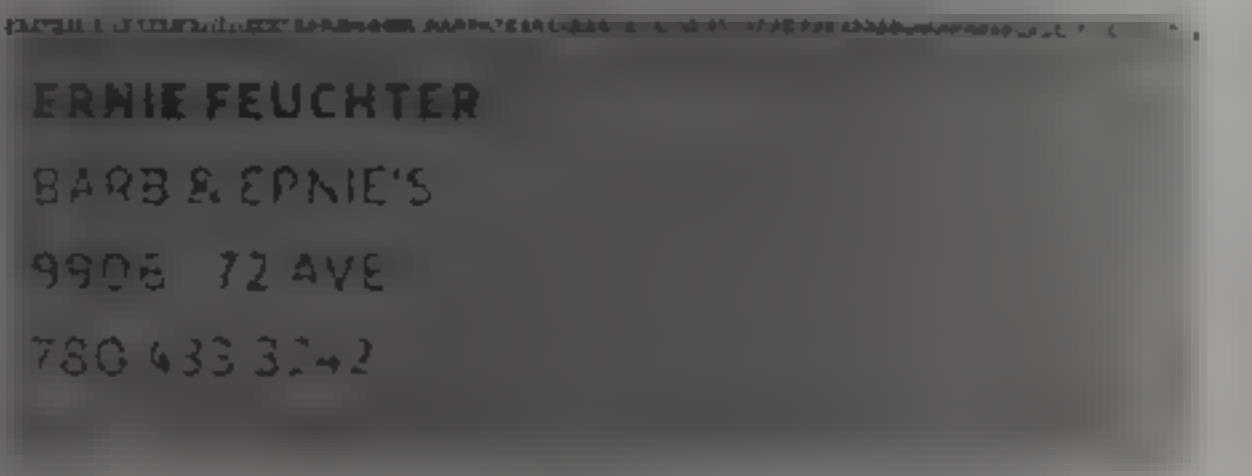
When they added eggs benedict to the menu, it immediately became a best seller. Now Barb & Ernie's serves over 15 varieties, including Schnitzel and Stuffed Pork Chop. "We not only make the hollandaise from scratch, but we also use white wine. It gives it such an incredible flavour. I don't understand the North American obsession with using vinegar."

Feuchter is now semi-retired and usually only works on the weekends. Barb & Ernie's is now in the capable hands of Feuchter's oldest son, Thomas, and Thomas's wife Charlene. The elder Feuchters are still involved though.

Barb cooks every day. "She's not retired because she doesn't want to be. She thinks she's too young."

Feuchter, when he's there, is kept busy inspecting plates and making sure things run smoothly. "It's so busy and we have such a big line-up that I use my personality and my big mouth to help organize the restaurant. Plus I get to see all my customers I've known for over 30 years."

And every Sunday he still dons his lederhosen, something he's been doing for the past 20 years. "I look like a little Bavarian coming down from a hut in the Alps." **V**



ERNIE FEUCHTER

BARB & ERNIE'S

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REVUE // HABESHA ETHIOPIAN AND ERITREAN CUISINE

Hooked on hookah

It's all about relaxing and sharing at Habesha

MARIA KOTOVYCH

// MARIA@VUEWEEKLY.COM

It's not incense, but the smell greets me as I walk into **Habesha Ethiopian and Eritrean Cuisine**. The faint smell of a strawberry shisha trickles into the entry area, inviting diners to try this restaurant's new offering.

Smoked in a glass water pipe called a hookah, shisha is a preparation of fruits and herbs. The stuff you get here doesn't contain nicotine. A separate shisha room sits to the right of the entryway, while the restaurant itself is on the other side. I glance behind the open curtain into the shisha room—a group of people relaxes there, enjoying a smoke.

We get to select our table, and choose to sit near a window that faces 118 Avenue. The street is quite busy on this Sunday evening, allowing for some compelling people-watching. Ethiopian music plays softly in the background, and I admire the embroidered tablecloths decorating the tables. Framed paintings grace the walls, contributing to the theme and the harmony within the restaurant.

Our server comes to the table for the drink order. He pours water for us immediately; any restaurant that does this scores automatic points with me. And so does the tea menu here.

One friend and I share the Habesha tea pot (\$5.99), a spicy beverage containing cinnamon, cardamom and cloves. This



SHARING >> Give a little, get a lot // Maria Kotovych

tea isn't afraid to let its flavour show; we enjoy it so much that we finish the whole pot before the food even arrives.

At this point, we ask about the shisha (\$12.00), but our server informs us that it's best to wait till after dinner, so that we can smoke without interruption from the meal.

Habesha offers a selection of veggie and meat dishes, including combo plates for groups of different sizes. Even though there are three of us, we choose the Veggie Combo for two (\$28.99). Wanting to try one meat dish, we add a serving of Yebeg Alichu (\$13.99), lamb in herb butter and spices.

The restaurant serves the food in a traditional way: everything that you order comes on a large plate that sits in the middle of the table. Then, diners use injera, a spongy bread, to scoop handfuls of food from the plate.

The plate arrives with the Veggie Combo and the lamb. The first veggie dish that I try is atkilit, a mixture of cabbage, carrots, potatoes and onions in a gently spiced sauce. The cabbage ends up being the strongest flavour, and the sauce matches this taste well. I enjoy the lamb, too, noting that more than one meat dish would be too much, given the generous helpings that this restaurant offers.

By far the best item on the plate is misser wot, a thick red lentil paste. The lentils are mixed with garlic, onions, ginger root, green peppers, olive oil and spices. This dish finds the perfect balance between spice, heat and flavour. My injera finds itself heading towards this dish many times during this meal.

I'm a fan of spinach, so I'm eager to try the gomen, spinach cooked in olive oil, garlic, onions and different spices. This dish pleases, not only because of its flavour, but also for its smooth, soft texture.

Unfortunately, two of the other dishes, the fosolia (string beans, carrots and potatoes) and the kik alitcha (split peas, garlic, onions, turmeric and olive oil) don't impress me as much as the others. The fosolia items feel overcooked, while the latter tastes bland and nondescript. Regardless, our group eats almost everything on the large plate; this was just the right amount of food.

The service does not disappoint during the visit—the servers come past our table very frequently, filling our water glasses, asking if everything is okay and generally seeing if we need anything.

We hear the variety of shisha flavours available, and pick strawberry from the long list that also includes mint, watermelon and orange. I've seen people using shisha before, but this is my first time trying it, so I need instruction. After demonstrating, the server gives each of us an individually wrapped plastic mouthpiece.

Away I go. I take a big, long drag, pleased with all the bubbles I'm making in the bottom of the hookah. At

this point, my friends are roaring with laughter at the expression on my face—eyes bulging and cheeks sucked in from my effort.

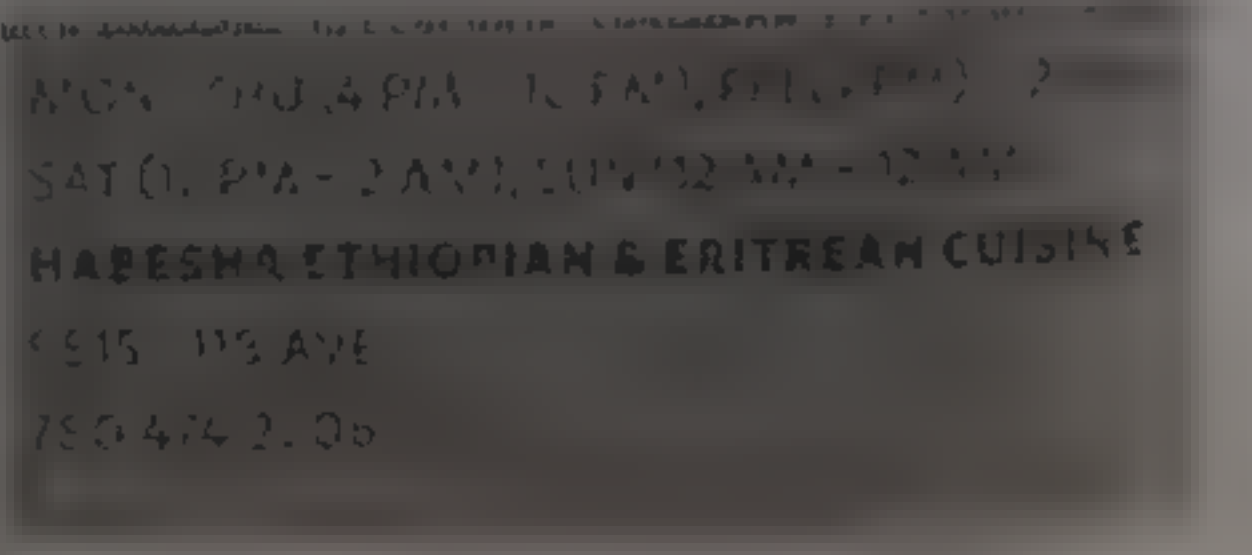
"You have to relax," my friend howls "This is for relaxation."

So I do. I relax. I lean back in my chair. Yeah, I'm cool. This time, I inhale slowly and shallowly. It's a bit stronger than, say, inhaling the vapours off a cup of strawberry herbal tea, but the taste is much the same. Well, maybe a bit spicier. And I like it, especially when I can do it correctly.

Still, try as I might, I'm far from being a hookah master by the end of the evening—some of my inhales are still too long, and I choke on the combination of smoke and laughter. My friends, of course, have no such problems, and they joke at my misfortunes. Good thing that we're sitting in a back corner of the restaurant.

While we're enjoying the shisha, we order some traditional Ethiopian coffee (\$10). But it's not just about the coffee; it's the entire coffee ceremony, which includes a demonstration of how the beans are roasted. We marvel at its rich taste, which isn't bitter whatsoever. I add nothing to my coffee.

There's a large selection of ethnic restaurants on 118 Avenue; Habesha, with good food and wonderful service, is a great place to go and breathe it all in. **V**

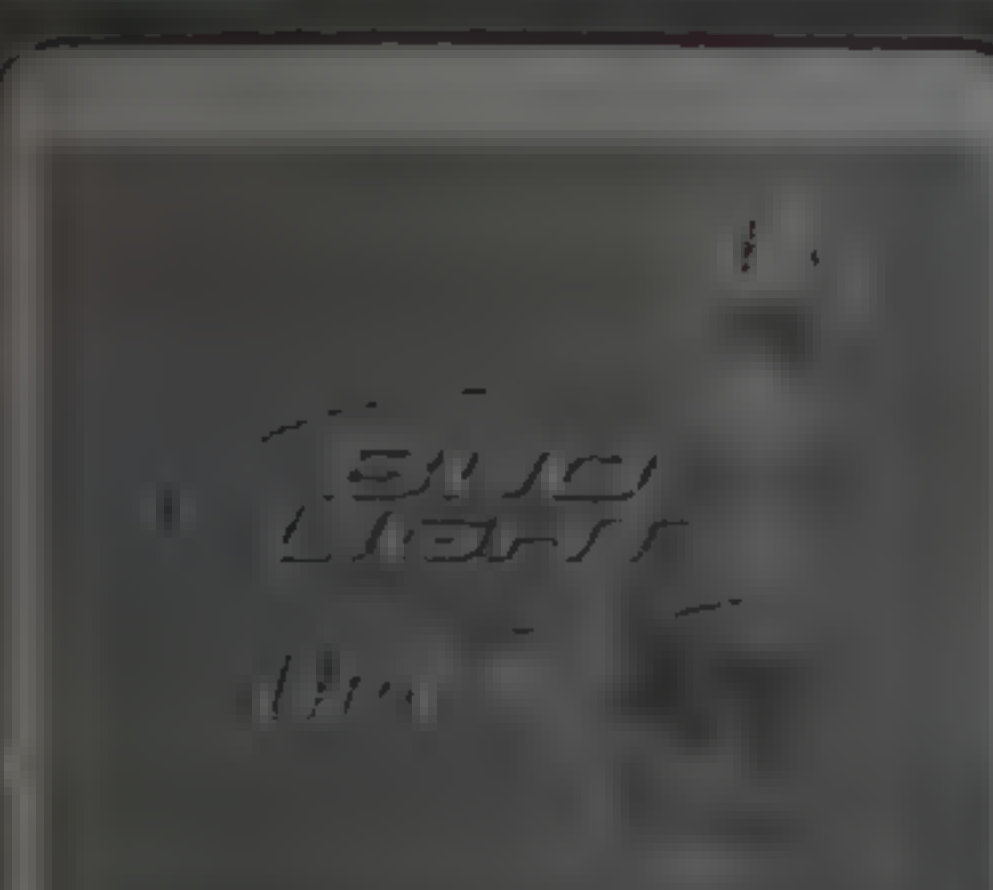


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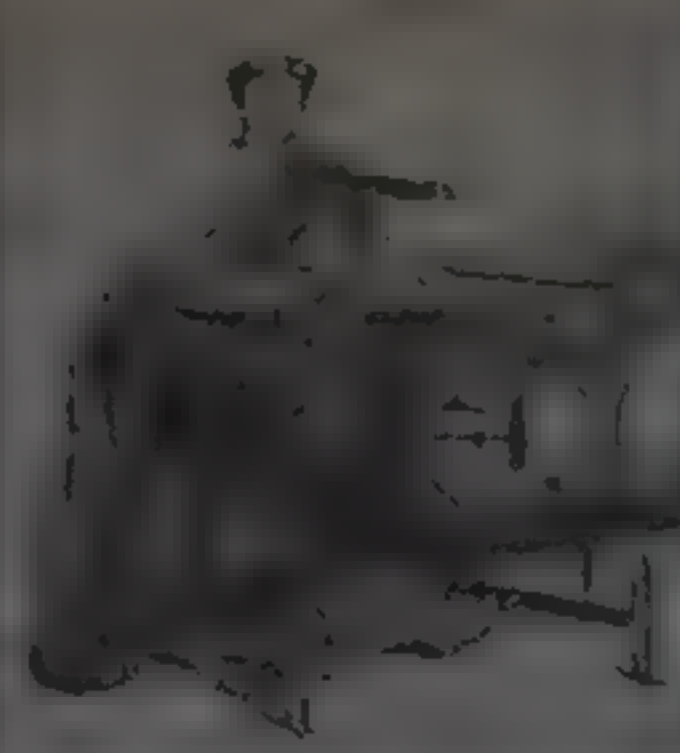
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REVUE // MALFUNCTIONING MEAT ROBOT / SURRENDER NO SURRENDER

Inside the outside

SNAP shows examine inside/outside roles in society

ADAM WALDRON-BLAIN

The Golem, the star of Matt Rebholz's *Malfunctioning Meat Robot*, is a mythologically sourced creature which Rebholz aims to repurpose as a means for commentary on contemporary society. In this series of prints, he builds his case for this, mixing images of myth and the modern mundane. His resulting images, packed with iconographic detail and internal references, are equal parts symbolist and cyberpunk. Outside in SNAP's studio gallery, Anthea Black's *Surrender No Surrender* is standing much more firmly in the present.

The *Malfunctioning Meat Robot* itself is a fertile starting point, a reinterpretation of a tragic theme in some Golem legends, where hubris and an out-of-control creation cause trouble. Here the Golem is most closely connected to non-Hebrew stories of man-like machines, like *Frankenstein*, which Rebholz's narrative is indebted to. Although inspired by a less well-known novel by Gustav Meyrink, the images of the larger-than-human artificial figure fleeing misunderstanding citizens are unmistakable.

The real emphasis of Rebholz's work is a gruesome play between inside and outside, and here he certainly goes farther than *Frankenstein*'s awkward social situations, eating of acorns and berries, and notable absence of any depiction of how Shelley's monster actually works. His prints are filled with characters eating, shitting, climbing in and out of windows (and one another), connecting themselves to tubes or just displaying whatever orifices are convenient. It is not subtle, even when the ingestion/expulsion motif is broadened to include televisions and cell phones.

Although there are small details in some of these images that do really work, they're often overwhelmed by the obvious scatological themes and Rebholz's apparent need to make his characters and settings ugly and polluted. Further, he has made these elements the focus of the series. The rough characters and unclear narrative, combined with Rebholz's drawing style and motifs, make much of *Malfunctioning Meat Robot* feel like a self-consciously dark, fragmentary comic book with a second-rate Tim Burton knock-off aesthetic, right down to the stripy shirt and skeleton in "Chapter II." It seems to confuse depiction of consumptive greed with real interesting content, and its construction of "character" doesn't seem to go beyond flaws.

A few of the prints manage some subtleties that are worth looking at: the internal reference and tiny dinosaur in "Chapter IX" are almost enough to



BEWARE THE GOLEM >> *Malfunctioning Meat Robot* examines the chaos created by an inhuman monster // Matt Rebholz

make up for the pissing dog and unclear action, where pedestrians scream in terror of what might be a gigantic figure, except that with the necessarily rough, would-be expressionistic perspective of the drawing style the Golem might not be that big at all. I similarly enjoy some elements of "Chapter IV," which seems simultaneously the most committed to both the cyberpunk and symbolist iconographies and generally the best-dressed set of the bunch, and also some of the fantastical images later in the series, but you should steer clear of "Chapter VII"'s terrifyingly cliché ugly bathroom.

Malfunctioning Meat Robot plays a curious foil to Anthea Black's *Surrender No Surrender*, outside in the studio gallery. Like Rebholz's Golem, *Surrender* is about transgression and a construction of inside/outside social roles, is unapologetic in its referentiality and its well-worn stylistic choices, and doesn't exactly shy away from sex. But while I'm not certain that it accomplishes what it sets out to, its material is much more engaging. Rebholz's cyborg is a fine enough model of boundary crossing, but happily we don't have to rely on vague allegory to decode which bound-

aries, exactly, are being crossed here. Plus: some of the posters and associated queer-activist ephemera are funny.

I'm uncertain about what purpose this collection is meant to be serving in the gallery space. With one print scene and some handkerchiefs pasted to the wall at the front of the space, and a collection of propaganda in the back, *Surrender No Surrender* is an awkward visitor to the room. It seems like a work in progress, its assembly an ongoing project which serves its own goals, the collected items not really needing a gallery to function—this exhibition is mostly just evidence that it's happening. The nature of SNAP's studio gallery as a workspace makes this slightly forgivable, but it's difficult to describe it as a show. For the purposes of this review, that seems to be a bad thing, but in the future it may not be so—I can imagine Black's collection becoming more pointed as it continues to grow and change. ▽

UNTIL SAT, SEP 5

MALFUNCTIONING MEAT ROBOT
WORKS BY MATT REBHOLZ

SURRENDER NO SURRENDER

WORKS BY ANTHEA BLACK
SNAP (10309 • 97 ST)

PREVUE // LATITUDE 53'S DRAW

Get your DRAW on

Latitude expands its late-night art party to an all-day extravaganza of drawing

TAWOBA MITRUSH

LATITUDE 53, 10248 106 ST

For the uninitiated, drawing a simple, proportionate stick figure is sometimes a daunting task. Even finding the time, space and materials to create visual art is no easy feat for most.

Formerly known as the Draw-a-thon, Latitude 53's DRAW is now an all-day, hands-on event that not only offers the space and means to create art, but also a bit of guidance on how to get started. The difference in the rebranding of the event, coordinator Vicky Wong explains, is that while the Draw-a-thon was a late-night art party (which DRAW will return to once the gallery's bar opens and the bands kick off around 8 pm), the focus of this year's event is about community outreach.

"We're trying to reach a broader audience to hopefully encourage critical dialogue about art and contemporary art practices," Wong explains. "This is not just an event to get people aware of Latitude 53, it's also a very participation-heavy event. It's about increasing and expanding our notions of art."

As for how far those notions will be expanded, Wong and crew trawled town for artists from varying backgrounds who could give insight into different artistic methods. "We wanted to be a lot more experimental with the drawing medium. Sometimes people get the idea that it's just about pen and paper," Wong says.

This is how a mid-week visit to FA-VA's offices found their interim program director Chris Payne playing with household cleaners and strips of film leader. Payne will be offering a workshop at DRAW to initiate participants into a process called direct animation, a very unique method of filmmaking. As a demonstration, he rounds up a bottle of Fantastik and a random snip of exposed film, spraying the strip while namedropping his predecessors in the field: Len Lye, Norman McLaren and Stan Brakhage experimented with drawing on or directly manipulating film stock to create their works (as opposed to, you know, straight-up filming stuff).

As a spritz of Fantastik dissolves the emulsion off an exposed cut of film, Payne takes a razor blade and starts slicing and morphing the images on it, explaining that the techniques he'll be demonstrating at this Saturday's workshop won't be quite so "toxic"—after all, legend has it that Brakhage developed cancer largely because of his years of work on raw celluloid.

"Basically we'll be drawing directly

onto the film," he says. "From a film perspective it's fun because it's taking and using really old film stock or little bits of film ephemera that nobody's really ever going to use again and repurposing them for artistic uses."

Payne explains that the total unpredictability of his form is what makes it interesting. The loops of film he usually works with are about 10 seconds long, each frame only visible for a 48th of a second when pulled through a projector.

"I think the big thing about it is that

While the Draw-a-thon was a late-night art party (which DRAW will return to once the gallery's bar opens and the bands kick off around 8 pm), the focus of this year's event is about community outreach

it's a very imprecise art. Unlike a lot of things about filmmaking, especially analog filmmaking where it's very time and labour intensive, this is a total crashshoot," he smiles. "You never know what you're going to get. It's wonderful because so many things you can do with it are really more up to chance. It's like a series of happy accidents."

"What I hope is that people get an experience that allows them to access film and video art but in a very tactile way," Payne says in regards to the workshop, where he'll supply short loops of clear and black leader film, the finished strips to be projected on Latitude's walls throughout the event. "The great thing about being able to work with these processes is that there's actually something which you can hold in your hands. Digital will never have that. It will never give you that ability to be able to pick it up and say that's the image I shot, or that's the image I created by hand. There's something so satisfying about it. I always hope that what people can get out of it more than anything else is that little bit of a sense of wonder that I had when I first did it." ▽

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It's a jungle in there

Piñol journeys into colonial times in pair of novels

The artwork that envelops Penguin Canada's recent editions of *Cold Skin* (\$18) and *Pandora in the Congo* (\$18) feature spare images that represent distinctive, exotic locations, a lighthouse overlooking a seductively gloomy sea of mist in the first, the talon-like roots of some massive tropical tree in the second. The images loom over the titles, and are cradled in darkness. I

was immediately made me intrigued by this pair of novels from an author I hadn't heard of, and, most importantly, they did so by evoking something extremely rare in contemporary fiction, promising stories of places in the world still shrouded in shadow, of mysteries lingering within under-explored and little understood landscapes. Which is precisely what these wonderful new books offer us.

Translated by Cheryl Leah Morgan and now available to English-language readers, *Cold Skin*, originally published in 2002, and *Pandora in the Congo*, originally published in 2005, are the first works of Catalan author **Albert Sánchez Piñol**, a former anthropologist whose fecund imagination feeds upon models from what feels like a very long century ago. Yet somehow his stories read not in slightest like the sort of postmodern pastiche common to other recent incorporations of genre into literary fiction. He's not subverting older narrative forms so much as shaking them back to life and imbuing them with significance for a new, smaller world. These are serious novels of adventure and strangeness, written with a serious focus on deeply engaging plotting and precise description, and on rendering the fantastical as something chillingly real. The stories, unsurprisingly, are set in the same time period as the sort of popular novels they recall, those of H.G. Wells, Jules Verne and Joseph Conrad especially.

To remind us how mysterious our world can be, how conducive to wild imaginings,

Sánchez Piñol takes us back to a moment when even the most technologically advanced and powerful societies were not so confident, and certainly not so convincing, in their claims as to what the rest of the world is made of. I ate it up like candy. Except this candy is nutritious—it entertains the hell out of you, but also resonates intensely with the frailties of the human psyche and the ongoing precariousness of colonial pursuits.

"We are never very far from those we hate. For this very reason, we shall never be truly close to those we love." As *Cold Skin* begins its nameless narrator is about to arrive on the small Antarctic isle where the rest of the novel will take place. He has taken the job of weather observer and is contracted for one year. The rhythms are incantatory, guiding us ominously toward our destination, imparting upon us in just a handful of words great distance and time and arduous travel. "We had our first sighting of the island at dawn. It had been 33 days since the dolphins fell away stemward and 19 since the crew's breath first expelled clouds of vapour." The narrator is accompanied by the ship's captain and some crewmembers to carry his year's worth of food and books to his new abode. They encounter the only other man on the island, the lighthouse keeper, but he behaves strangely and may have gone insane. Nevertheless, the ship needs to continue on its route and leaves the narrator there.

Cold Skin is a short novel, and things get weird fast. The narrator discovers the terrible secret of this lonesome place: a race of amphibious creatures who attack only at night. He's soon forced to make an uneasy alliance with the lighthouse keeper in order to fend off the creatures. The lighthouse keeper holds one of the creatures captive, a female, whose eerie allure gives the novel its title. Bestiality becomes familiar in this uncivilized place, and jealousy and desire rise up out of the murk. I won't tell you just where this all goes, though its image-vocab-

ulary, themes and motifs are rich enough to spill over into Sánchez Piñol's followup.

Pandora in the Congo is twice as long as *Cold Skin*, and while it departs from its predecessor's lean, claustrophobic approach, it is in many ways more ambitious while still focusing on young, ostensibly pacifist heroes with few attachments—orphans of one sort or another—and adventures in hostile places that engender unsustainable or unattainable strange love. As the First World War looms, Londoner Tommy Thomson makes his first forays into a literary career, albeit of a not very distinguished sort. He becomes a ghostwriter for a crude, racist old bastard, more a brand name than a legitimate author. He makes a pittance and works like a slave to crank out pre-plotted pulp tales of heroic Europeans in savage lands. But a series of coincidental deaths lead Tommy to realize that there is in fact a longer chain of would-be ghostwriters than he thought, and that he, being the final link, is simply the most deftly exploited: the ghostwriter's ghostwriter's ghostwriter's ghostwriter. He then takes another, seemingly more noble ghostwriting gig, working for a barrister who represents a man accused of double homicide while working as a cook for two aristocratic brothers exploring the Congo with a team of black African slaves who do all the heavy lifting and then some. He's to interview the accused and novelize his story, the idea being that by making his Congolese adventure into something compelling and sympathetic the barrister will go to trial with the public on his side. It's in doing these interviews that Tommy's adventure really begins, though it is very much a kind of adventure by proxy.

Tommy narrates *Pandora in the Congo* from a perspective of 60 years, though Sánchez Piñol is careful to minimize the editorializing of hindsight, letting us develop our own understanding of how the novel's complex webs of treachery speak to the modern world. There are exceptions of course, but I'd argue that they enlighten us more than they condescend:

"active collaboration in evil was a matter of a concession as simple as holding out your hand—that hand was the essence of the 20th century." Culpability is endlessly ambiguous here. Tommy writes hateful trash, but he does so only because he's employed by the trash's true author. He later writes a great adventure novel that he only hopes is in the service of a good cause, but he could just as easily be completely deceived. The man whose story Tommy writes—the man has the curious name of Marcus Garvey—commits horrific acts while journeying through the Congo, but he does so under strict orders from the men who employ him. Such moral quandaries only balloon as the plots continue to take its marvelous twists.

Besides the rich white Europeans and poor white Europeans, besides the black slaves being worked to death and the black slaves employed to help exploit their own kind, there is an additional people roped into Tommy's narrative, an underground race of humanoids who, like the creatures in *Cold Skin*, quickly

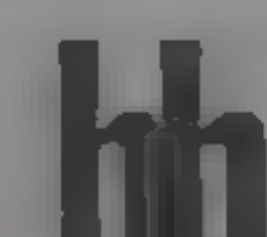
become the Other for which violence and domination are deemed the only appropriate response. As in *Cold Skin*, a female from this race becomes the centre point of a battle between various male desires, including that of our narrator. The novel's narrative threads are laid out with the caveat that nearly all of them are relayed by someone other than the writer of the words we read. They are interpreted, digested, possibly tainted, possibly lies. Our narrator seems himself to be reliable, but he can only narrate what he's told. In the end, we're overwhelmed by the impossibility of stories being the creations of a single author, and here is where we catch a glimpse of the philosophy of Sánchez Piñol himself, who openly employs the styles and trajectories of the novels he's presumably admired. Let's not get too concerned with tracing or judging the indefinable labyrinth of sources for our tales, *Pandora in the Congo* implies, but rather surrender to the conviction of the telling we're given. It may be the only lasting consolation. ▽

Lyndal Osborne Ornamenta

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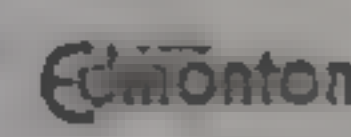


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BOOKS // THE PLEASURES AND SORROWS OF WORK

Proletariat panorama

Alain De Botton surveys modern jobs in his latest book

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE
 // MARYCHRISTA@VUEWEEKLY.COM

In the opening pages of *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work*, Alain De Botton lays out his ambitions for the handsome sky-blue volume. His hope is to craft a textual analogue of the panoramas of Canaletto, the 18th-century Venetian renowned for exquisitely detailed views of bustling cities. In Canaletto's day, his paintings functioned like photographs of our contemporary "urban hive" genre—those visual accounts of modern metropolitan life that pretend to stalk a buzz of activity grown so permanently frenetic that it apparently can no longer be captured and stilled, merely contemplated as blurry sashes of movement and light.

That's progress: elusive, indistinct, and sloppy. But as European cities absorbed a crush of humanity and commerce in the early dawn of the Industrial Age, that slippery feeling of acceleration manifested in Canaletto's work through a cessation of motion, a détente between experience and time expressed on canvas, in which his audience could witness the city as a whole generated by a mysterious collaboration of meticulously transcribed individual acts.

De Botton labours in this tradition, and in territory he's staked out before, if not in subject, by thematic contour. The author's a sort of gonzo intellectual, middle-fingering the literary fad of obsessively unraveling minutiae—that blight of "Curious Histories," of which

only a fraction are better than numbingly mediocre—and spurning scholarly writing conventions like footnotes and evidence in favour of a personal voice and freewheeling form, while undertaking big questions in hopes of bigger answers. His past ruminations tackled grand topics on modern Western societal condition: the nature of love and status, psychological effects of physical environments, practical applications of philosophy. *Pleasures and Sorrows* adds another area of human experience to his canon, approached as a travelogue of synecdochal encounters in 10 chapters that meander around different occupations or industries after an opening salvo of Walt Whitman.

The section on logistics provides opportunity to muse on the rise of micro-specialization, the theatre of industry and its global nature, and takes him from a fishing boat in the Maldives to the side of a British child expressing dislike of his fish supper, partially driven by his notion of the emptying seas as home to legions of briny piscine ghosts, unforgiving of our appetites for tuna steaks and salmon fillets. Through mass-market cookie-making he addresses the absurdity of branding, limning the "authorship" of a new cookie, two years and \$6 million in the making, birthed by a set of focus-grouped feelings, which lets him wonder at the pointlessness of most labour, which sets up his visit to a wise career counselor who dismantles the sacred idea of "the calling," begetting an elucidation

of why we seek meaning through our jobs. And on and on, as he attends a telecom satellite launch in French Guiana, follows a middle-aged nature artist from field to show, lurks around a world-leading accountancy firm, and befriends inventors before ending his journey at a plane graveyard in the California desert in an orgy of thoughts on death and progress.

There is, of course, much more. The pleasures of De Botton come less from the gravity of his ideas, which are more fully and provocatively addressed by other writers, than in his digressions. (An unfortunate exception is his penchant for engaging random harried workers with Marxist dialectics or other cerebral narcissisms to be met only with supposed uncomprehending fear or anger. He may be attempting self-deprecating humour, but these loathsome tales fail dismally to project anything other than smugness.)

But mostly it's good and worthwhile, with some sublime insights (like when he nails the business plan as "a sub-genre of contemporary fiction"). Just as Canaletto's paintings of work also show the work of the painter, so De Botton reveals his own writerly labours in crafting his work about work, lending beauty and emotive power to his investigation. **V**

THE PLEASURES AND SORROWS OF WORK
 BY ALAIN DE BOTTON
 MCCLELLAND & STEWART
 326 PP, \$26

BOOKS // FALL

Autumn of our discontent

McAdam spins a mystery of disaffection at boarding school

SUE KARP
 // SUE@VUEWEEKLY.COM

This novel is the mystery of Fall, a young girl, and what happened to her during the autumn of her senior year at an exclusive boarding school for diplomats in Ottawa, St. Ebury. What role did her boyfriend, Julius, and his roommate, Noel, play in her disappearance? What are the boundaries of the relationship between Julius and Noel, and how did Fall complicate that friendship? When does a boy become a man? Can a man ever truly know his own self? How much violence lurks in all our dark hearts? These are the questions which Colin McAdam wrestles with amid the chilling tumult of *Fall*.

Privilege has an attraction for those who lack it while those who possess it often have nothing but utter contempt for it. It's easy to imagine how much better one's life would be if one enjoyed the privilege of wealth, athletic prowess, charisma, popularity. Only when one possesses those supposed attributes is it possible to realize how little they actually add to one's life, how they cannot summon happiness. The dual characters of Julius and Noel fit into this paradox of possession versus yearning in the most classic Canadian sense: Ju-

lius is the son of the wealthy and powerful American ambassador to Canada while Noel's father is a poor imitation, serving as Consul General in Australia.

Julius is the bright sun around which so much life revolves in the cloistered world of St. Ebury, while Noel is just his haplessly strange roommate for senior year. Over the course of the novel, the boys' relationship shifts from strange acquaintances to friends and their lives begin to intertwine. Enter Fall, Julius' perfect girlfriend who unhappily is also the object of Noel's obsession. A closer relationship with Julius brings Noel nearer to the focus of his own affection and the lines of identity blur as Noel insinuates himself into both Julius and Fall's lives. Noel begins to shift from harmless curiosity to a looming shadow of menace as the baser aspects of his personality emerge.

Part of the beauty of this novel is the shifting of narrative voice from Julius to Noel to an occasional view from William, the official chauffeur for Julius's father. Each voice is distinct, though there is always clear instruction on who is speaking at the current moment. Noel is the voice of cool reason, impeccable logic and self-reflection. He is a character searching for

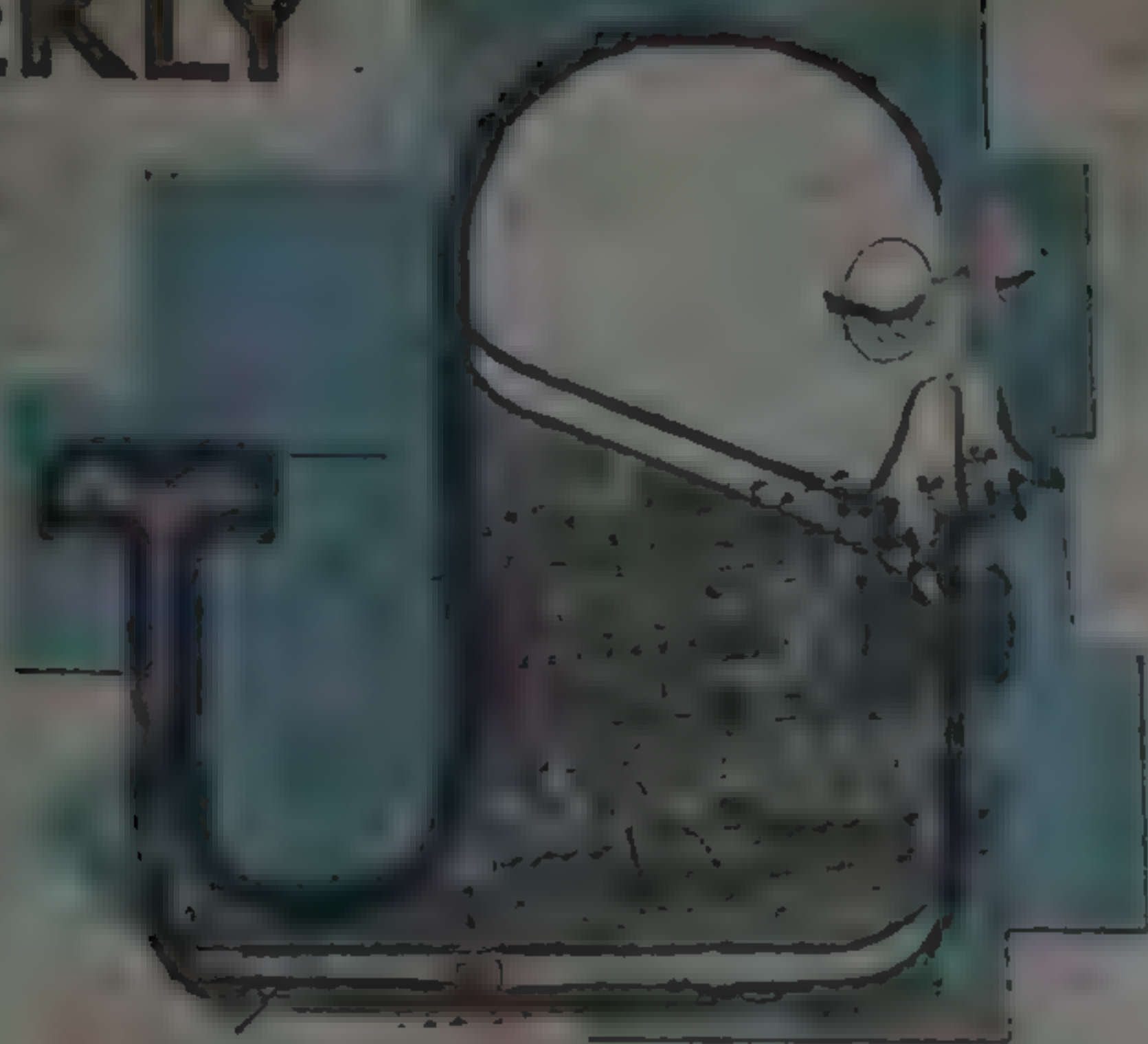
a definition of himself discovering that he consistently lacks any means to do so and that his quest is never ending since he continues to change and evolve over the course of his life. Noel's words are empty, signifying nothing except a desire to instill meaning in that which the eye holds worthy of contemplation. Julius is the more prototypical teenage boy, and while his self-reflection at first appears to be shallow, he is honest and undeniable, a force of motion.

Built around a non-linear narrative, *Fall* is constantly shifting perspective and building suspense with interminable foreshadowing that intrigues at first but eventually leads to frustration. The occasional poetical embellishments in Noel's character lend the most gorgeous examples of writing in the novel. It's a tremendously difficult task to imagine how another person's world is constructed in their head and McAdam adroitly accomplishes this while also spinning an addictive novel. **V**

FALL
 BY COLIN MCADAM
 HAMISH HAMILTON CANADA
 308 PP, \$32

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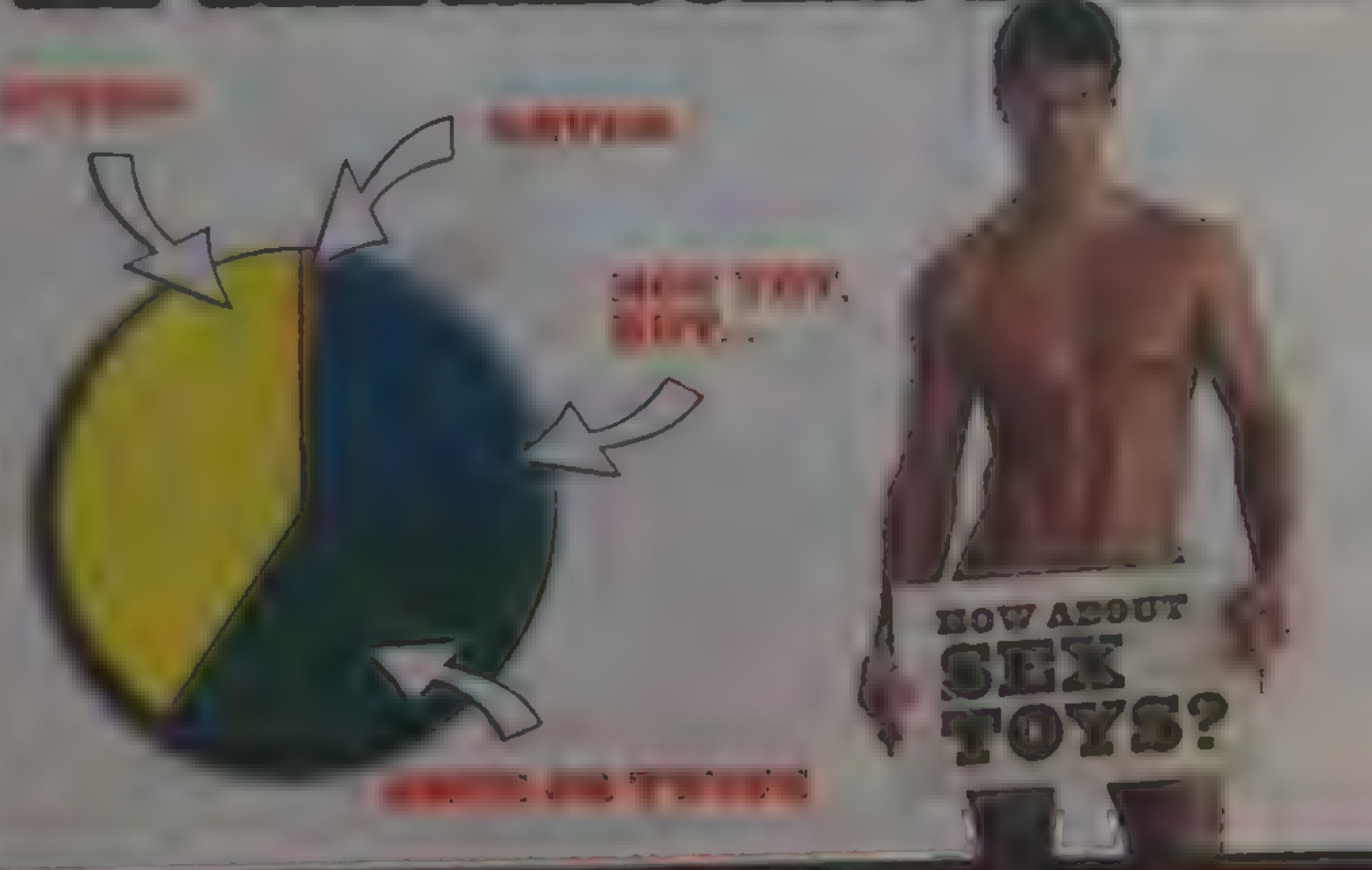
look to next week's issue for details

SEX IN THE CITY

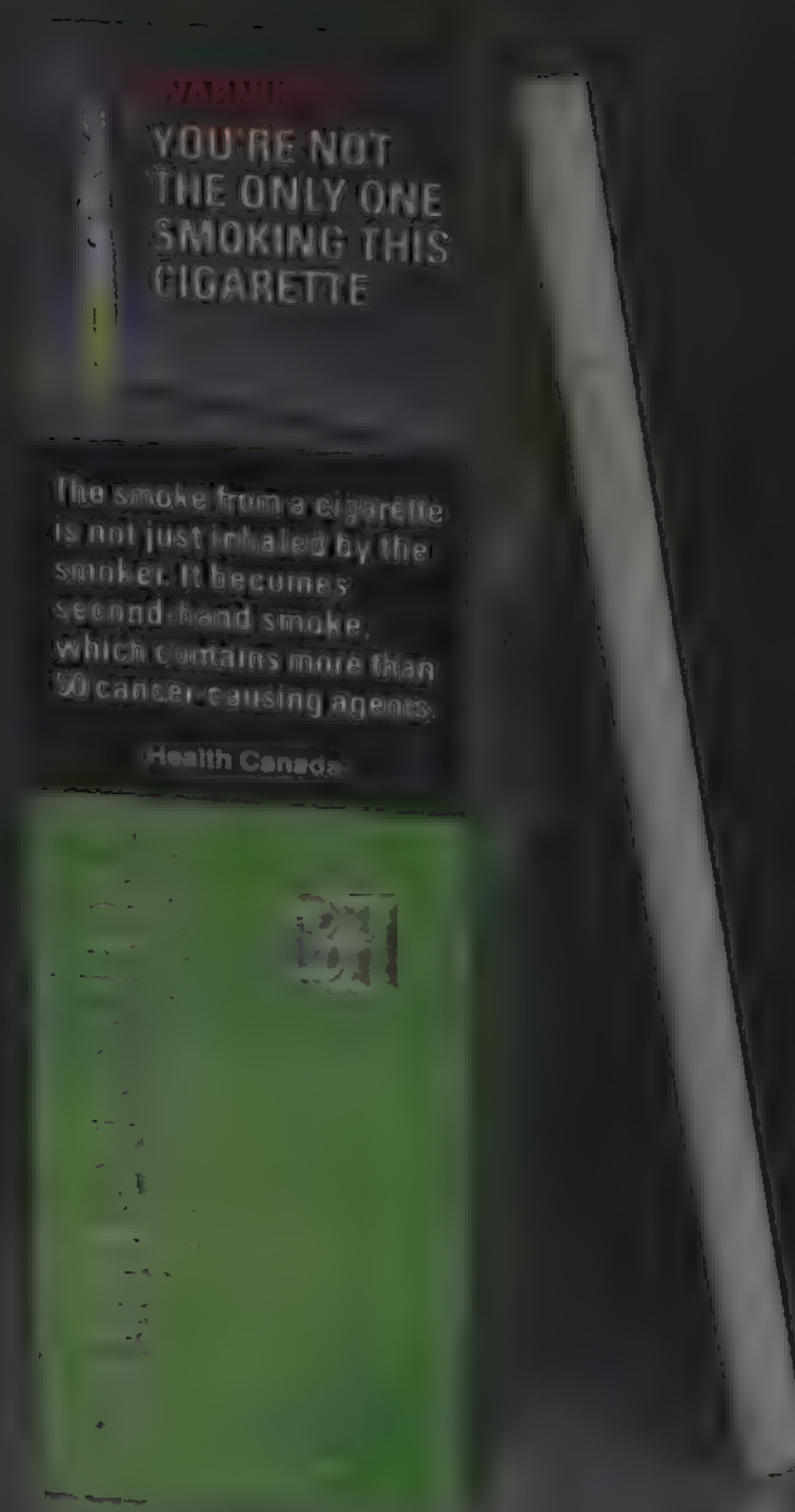
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FILM

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Screening of *Bad Coffer*, a locally made short
by Eric Taylor and James Karvellas. Followed
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Barn and The Great Dane Gretzky • Aug 1,
7pm (9:30 screening) • Free

MOVIES ON THE SQUARE Sir Winston
Churchill Sq, 100 St, 102 Ave, 780.944.7740 • www.
edmonton.ca/moviesonthesquare • Experience
movies on a 3-story high inflatable screen • Fri,
10:30 • Free

NATIONAL FILM BOARD Edmonton Room,
Stanley Milner Public Library, 7 Sir Winston
Churchill Sq • *The Strangest Dream* Documentary •
Sun, Aug 9, 2pm • Free

GALLERIES + MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL 10186-106 St,
780.488.6611 • **Lower Gallery:** *HITCHED:* Couples
in craft; until Oct 3

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St-Anne St, St-Albert,
780.459.3679 • *WINGS AND PETALS:* Artworks by
Sharon Moore-Foster and Allison • Until Aug 1

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA Enterprise
Square, 100 St, 102 Ave, 780.944.7740 • **REAL
LIFE:** Ron Mueck (sculptor) and Guy Ben-Ner
(video); until Sept 7 • **REALISMS:** Artworks showing
various concepts of "Realism" as they appear in
the history of art; until Aug 23 • **THE PAINTER
AS PRINTMAKER:** Impressionist prints from
the National Gallery of Canada; until Aug 23 •
SPEEDING SUBJECT: RBC New Works Gallery:
Mary Joyce's landscape paintings and drawings;
until Aug 23 • **A NEW LIGHT:** Canadian Painting
After Impressionism: Exploring the influence of
Impressionism on Canadian painting in the late
19th and early 20th century. Featuring works from
the AGA Collection • until Aug 23 • **1-MINUTE
of REAL LIFE:** Video contest; until Sun, Aug 2,
11:59pm • **Art for Lunch:** Enterprise Square Atrium:
Impressionist inspired Monoprints: with Lee Bale
and Nicole Reeves, Studio and School Programs;
Thu, July 30, 12:10-12:50 pm; Free on the last Thu
every month, 12:10-12:50pm • **Tuesday Tours:** *The
Many Forms of Realism* with Catherine Crowston;
Aug 4 and 11, 12:10-12:50pm; Free with Admission
• Free (member)/\$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student); \$5
(6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family-2 adults,
4 children); Pay-What-You-May, Thu, 4-8pm

**CALGARY AND EDMONTON RAILWAY
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museum book)

**CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE
L'ALBERTA** 9103-95 Ave • **SUMMER PROJECT**
Photographs by Jaque Rioux, Tom Hamp, Bill
Dunn, Steve Speer and Jan Boydol, artworks by
Catherine Rioux, Agathe St-Pierre and
her students; glass and pottery by Jody Swanson •
Until Aug 11

CHRISTL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY
100 St, 102 Ave, 780.944.7740 • **MYSELF, THE
ARTIST:** Artworks by Christl Bergstrom, until Aug
30

COMMON SENSE 10546-115 St, 780.482.2685,
www.common-sense-gallery.com • **A SHOW:** new abstract
painting; Andrew French • Until Aug 22

CROOKED POT GALLERY 4912-51 Ave,
780.963.9573 • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm
• Pottery pieces for indoor and outdoor
use by Tammy Parks Legge • Through July

DEVONIAN GARDEN N of Devon on Hwy 60

• Artworks by the Parkana Art Club • July 31-Aug 7,
10am-6pm

ELECTRUM GALLERY 12419 Stony Plain Rd,
780.482.1402 • Gold and silver jewellery by Wayne
Mackenzie, and artworks by various artists

FRINGE GALLERY 10516 Whyte Ave, bsmt of
the Paint Spot, 780.432.0240 • **THE RETURN OF
THE WILD TROUT:** Watercolours by James Trev-
elyan; until July 31 • Artworks by Mandy Archibald;
through Aug

GALLERY AT MILNER Stanley A. Milner
Library Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Square,
780.496.7030 • **SKIES:** Oil paintings by Debra
Hovestad • Aug 4-31

GALLERY IS Alexander Way, 5123-48 St, Red
Deer, 403.341.4641 • **ONE A DAY:** Paintings by Jeri
Lynn Ing and Erika Schulz

HARCOURT HOUSE GALLERY 11215-102 St,
780.426.4180 • **ORNAMENTA:** Travelling exhibition,
artworks by Lyndal Osborne • July 30-Aug 29 •
Opening reception: July 30, 7-10 pm • Artist Talk:
Thu, Aug 6, 7pm

HARRIS-WARKE GALLERY-Red Deer
Sunworks, 4924 Ross St, Red Deer, 403.346.8937 •
BEND: Sculptures and drawings by Tanya Zuzak •
Until Aug 7

JOHNSON GALLERY • **Southside:** 7711-85 St,
780.465.6171; New works by Ada Wong, Julie Drew,
Ruth Vontobel-Brunner, Audrey Pfannmuller
and Daniel Bagan. Blown glass by Sol Maya •
Northside: 11817-80 St, 780.479.8424; Artworks by
Don Sharpe, Jim Painter, Dan Bagan. Historical
photographs of Edmonton. Wood carvings by Adie.
Pottery by Noboru Kubo • Through July

KAMENA 5718 Calgary Tr S, 780.944.9497 • Mon-
Wed, Fri 10am-6pm; Thu 10am-7pm; Sat 10am-5-
pm • Artworks by various artists

KAASA GALLERY Jubilee Auditorium, 11455-87
Ave • **OPEN PHOTO** 2009: Presented by Visual Arts
Alberta • Until Sept 30

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St, 780.423.5353 • **Sum-
mer Rooftop Patio Series:** Every Thu 5-9 pm until
Aug 13 • Dedicated to Gilbert Bouchard on July
30 • Avenue on Aug 6 • **DRAW:** 12 hour marathon
of drawing (supplies provided), collaboration and
live music; all ages; Sat, Aug 1, 12pm • **Main Space:**
PRIVATE PROPERTY—ACCESS DENIED: A series
of security guards in a site-specific installation by
Thomas Kneubuhler (Switzerland); Aug 7-Sept 5;
Artist talk: Sat, Aug 8 • **ProjEx Room:** **ART PARA-
PHERNALIA FOR A MODERN WORLD:** Stanton's
store brings the shopping experience into the gal-
lery, investigating the roles of art and the gallery
in the society as an emblem of aesthetics, design,
lust, desire, wants, needs, and habits; Aug 7-Sept 5

LOFT GALLERY 590 Broadmoor Blvd, Sher-
wood Park, 780.922.6324 • Open every Thu 5-9pm;
Sat 10-4pm • **NEW ART ("ANYTHING GOES")** • July
23-Aug 29

MCMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital,
8440-112 St, 780.407.7152 • **NATURAL DESIGNS:**
Landscape paintings and abstract photographs by
Jim Visser and Wenda Salomons • Until Aug 23

MCPAG Multicultural Centre Public Art Gallery,
5411-51 St, Stony Plain, 780.963.2777 • Photography
by Margaret Lozinski • Until Aug 12

**MENNONITE CENTRE GLOBAL GAL-
LERY** 10209-97 St • **THIS VILLAGE:** Curated by
Shane Golby, art works created by five immigrants
to Alberta, Shumba Z. Ash (Zimbabwe), Ljubomir
Ilic (Croatia), Pedro Rodriguez De Los Santos
(Uruguay), Akiko Taniguchi (Japan), Erika Vela
(Peru) • Aug 1-26 • Opening reception: Sat, Aug
1, 2-4 pm

**MICHIF CULTURAL AND MÉTIS
RESOURCE INSTITUTE** 9 Mission Ave, St.
Albert, 780.651.8176 • Aboriginal Veterans Display
• Gift Shop • Finger weaving and sash display by
Celina Loyer

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19
Perron St, St Albert, 780.460.4310 • **O'CANADA
PROJECT:** Amy Loewen's installation; until Aug 1 •
HERS: Artworks by Izabella Orzelski Konikowski,
until Aug 1 • Opening reception: Aug 6, 6-9 pm

ST ALBERT ART WALK Wares, 780.459.1690;
780.458.7499; Art Beat Gallery, 780.459.3679; Profiles
Gallery, 780.460.4310; Studio Gallery, 780.460.5993;
Bookstore on Perron, 780.406.4674; Crimson Quill,
780.418.7803; Roche's Fine Things, 780.459.4095;
Concept Jewellery Design, 780.458.4660 • Thu, Aug
6, 6-9pm

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St, 780.488.3619 •
PAPER WORKS: artworks by Jerzy Gawlak, Jacque-
line Stehelin, Leslie Poole, Arlene Wasylynychuk,
and Brenda Malkinson • Until Aug 18

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St, 780.423.1492
• **Main Gallery:** *THE GOLEM PROJECT:* series
by Mark Rebholz • **Studio Gallery:** Artworks by
Anthea Black, SNAP's Winter Artist in Residence •
Until Sept 5

SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY
Melcor Cultural Centre, 35-5 Ave, Spruce Grove,
780.962.0664 • **HORSES:** Sculptures by Rebecca
Caron Lienau • July 28-Aug 14 • Opening reception:
Sat, Aug 1, 1-4pm

STEPPE GALLERIES 1253, 1259-91 St •
West Gallery: *NEW HANDS FOR FUN TIMES.*
Paintings by Mandy Espeezl; until Aug 3 • **East
Gallery:** *FABRICATING A FATHER: FURTHER
ADVENTURES OF A UNICORN BOY:* Paintings by
Travis McEwen; Until Aug 31 • Opening reception:
Thu, July 30, 6-8pm • To view contact: Kelley Bernt
at kelly.bernt@bldg-inc.ca

TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE 11211-141 St,
780.452.9100 • **DA VINCI: THE GENIUS:** Until Sept
7 • **IMAX: VAN GOGH: BRUSH WITH GENIUS:**
until Sept 7

URBAN ROOTS 10418 Whyte Ave • Open:
Wed-Sat 12-4pm or Ph 780.438.7978 • **PETITE
NUDES—A DUALITY OF FORM:** Sculptures by
Ritchie Velthuis and Beata Kurpinski • Until Aug 15

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, 10215-111 St,
780.421.1731 • **THE GOLDEN RULE:** Watercolours
by Michelle Leavitt-Djonlic • **IN THE BALANCE:**
Artworks by VAAA board members and staff •
July 30-Aug 29 • Opening reception: Fri, July 31,
7-9:30pm

LITERARY

ARTERY 9535 Jasper Ave • Poetry open stage with
Shima • July 30

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave,
780.423.3487 • Poetry Nights 2nd Fri each month

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ 9624-76 Ave, 780.469.8755 •
Story Slam: every 3rd Wed of the month

CARROT CAFÉ 9351-118 Ave, 780.471.1580 •
Carrot Writing Circle • Every Tue, 7-9pm; A critique
circle the 4th Tue every month

LEVA CAPPUCCINO BAR 11053-86 Ave,
780.479.5382, www.levabar.com • Standing room
only, poetry every 3rd Sun evening

ROSIE'S 10475-80 Ave, 780.439.7211 • **TALES:**
Edmonton Storytelling Café: T.A.L.E.S. Alberta
League Encouraging Storytelling open mic • 1st
Thu each month, 7-9pm • Pay-What-You-Will (min
\$6); info at 780.932.4409

ROUGE LOUNGE 10111-117 St, 780.902.5900 •
Poetry Tuesday: Every Tue with Edmonton's local
poets • 8pm • No cover

UPPER CRUST CAFÉ 10909-86 Ave,
780.422.8174 • The Poets' Haven: Monday Night
reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every
Mon, 7pm • \$5 door

THEATRE

THE LION KING Jubilee Auditorium •
Broadway Across Canada's theatrical production,
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SIX DANCE LESSONS IN SIX WEEKS
Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave,
780.483.4051 • By Richard Alfieri, the story of the
acquaintance between a sprightly retiree and her
young dance teacher • Until Aug 23 • Tickets at
Mayfield box office, toll-free: 1.877.529.7829

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TOP 30 FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 30, 2009

1. Wilco – The Album (nonesuch)
2. Dinosaur Jr. – Farm (jagjaguwar)
3. Steve Earle – Townes (new west)
4. Slaid Cleaves – Everything You Love Will Be Taken Away... (music road)
5. Neko Case – Middle Cyclone (anti)
6. VA - Ribbon Of Highway, Endless Skyway: The Woody Guthrie Tribute (music road)
7. The Low Anthem – Oh My God, Charlie Darwin (nonesuch)
8. Reverie Sound Review – S/T (boompaa)
9. Raul Malo – Lucky One (concord)
10. Sonic Youth – The Eternal (matador)
11. Eddi Reader – Love Is The Way (rough trade)
12. Jim Byrnes – My Walking Stick (black hen)
13. Gurf Morlix – Last Exit To Happyland (gurf morlix)
14. Lee Harvey Osmond – A Quiet Evil (latent)
15. Magnolia Electric Co. – Josephine (secretly canadian)
16. Neil Young – Fork In The Road (reprise)
17. The Wailin' Jennys – Live At The Mauch Chunk Opera House (outside)
18. Bob Dylan – Together Through Life (columbia)
19. Grizzly Bear – Veckatimest (warp)
20. Dave Alvin - And The Guilty Women (yep roc)
21. Rancid – Let The Dominos Fall (epitaph)
22. Dirty Projectors – Bitte Orca (domino)
23. David Gogo – Different Views (cordova bay)
24. The Decemberists – The Hazards Of Love (capitol)
25. Elvis Costello – Secret, Profane & Sugarcane (hear)
26. Hayden – The Place Where We Lived (hardwood)
27. Sunset Rubdown – Dragonslayer (jagjaguwar)
28. Joel Plaskett – Three (maplemusic)
29. Mos Def – The Ecstatic (downtown)
30. Pink Mountaintops – Outside Love (jagjaguwar)

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FILM

FILM

21

DVD Detective

22

G-Force

23

The Ugly Truth

Online at vucweekly.com

Apocalypse Now
by Josef Braun

Josef Braun continues the Best of the 2000s year-long feature with a look at the apocalypse

ROMANTIC COMEDY // (500) DAYS OF SUMMER

Not love, actually

(500) Days of Summer chokes itself on its own pretensions

DAVID BERRY

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

Whatever it's snappy, star-studded, occasionally classic roots, the romantic comedy has pretty long been a genre mired in obvious cliché, in no small part because anything that varies too wildly from the formula, which really needs no recounting, doesn't even get classed as such (did anyone ever slap the label on, say, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*?). That in mind, there's something to be said for having the courage of your convictions: a film like *He's Just Not That Into You* isn't exactly wildly clever or groundbreaking, and isn't even really likely to remain in the public consciousness past the year, but it has an obvious affection for its roots, and went off painting by its particular numbers with liveliness and a degree of aplomb.

Unfortunately in this particular case, that isn't something you can say about (500) Days of Summer, the indie (in the cultural movement sense of the word)-venered effort of music video director Marc Webb. Though its base assumptions are purely, almost densely standard of the romantic comedy—our primary reason for existence is to find true love, this is essentially fated, etc.—it expends an awful lot of energy pretending that that isn't at all the case, that it's somehow a complication or twist on all that cliché junk you know isn't actually true, literally to the point where it rants at you about how the fictional flights of fancy are pure bullshit right before it dives headlong back into that bullshit, deluded into thinking that acknowledging you're swimming in shit will keep you from smelling.

It's primary pretense is that it leaves out the last third of the boy-meets-girl-boy-loses-girl-boy-gets-girl-back formula, thus making it an anti-romcom. When Tom Hansen (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), a greeting-card writer/hopeless romantic in big headphones and a cardigan, meets Summer Finn (Zoëy Deschanel), he's fairly certain he's met the one. She's thoroughly irresistible—as another cute



LOVE WILL TEAR US APART >> Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Zoëy Deschanel pretend they're not in a standard romantic comedy // Fox Searchlight

voice-over makes clear—and, what's more, she also likes the Smiths, like him, a plot point that feels less like a convergence of honest character traits than a calculated point designed to appeal to a specific demographic (further evidenced by the fact Tom's wardrobe choices are limited entirely to cardigan/tie combos and Joy Division T-shirts). Summer, however, doesn't agree, and though they have a nice fling, she ultimately wants out, and, in the big twist, doesn't actually go back to Tom by the end.

There's a lot more to (500) Days' discomfort, though. The film is almost choked with postmodern tricks that give it some self-reflexive distance: the very literary voice-over, explicit references to *The Graduate*, a scene where Tom's expectations of a party and its reality play out simultaneously, its jumping back-and-forth through the narrative and of course the aforementioned monologue where

Tom, disillusioned with love, rails against the vacuity of greeting cards/pop songs/movies, angry at the lies about love they tell. That last one is particularly galling, not just for its blinding obviousness, but also, relating to the indie veneer thing, because Tom is explicitly set up as someone whose ideas of love come in part from a childhood spent with '80s British indie bands, and I don't know if you've listened to a lot of Smiths or Joy Division lately, but if what you're getting out of them is that your true love is out there waiting somewhere for you, you either don't understand aural English or you're a rushed screenwriter picking your character traits from mid-western daily newspaper Hot or Not columns. To put it more succinctly: exactly what part of "Love Will Tear Us Apart" is unclear to screenwriters Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber (whose only previous credit, it's worth pointing out, is *The Pink Panther 2*)?

This combination of rank hypocrisy/character by trend is particularly frustrating given that, when left to its more straight rom-com devices, (500) Days can be alternately heartbreaking and sweet. Well, back up a bit: when it's not indulging its more outright comedy side, it can be heartbreaking and sweet. The characters that surround Tom and Summer, specifically his wildly divergent stereotype friends—one's been in a relationship since Grade 7, one hasn't been in a relationship since Grade 7—his precious sister and their bland boss, are pretty roundly annoying, attempted comic relief that don't manage much of either.

However, when it's just Gordon-Levitt and Deschanel, (500) Days is a frequently entertaining, sprightly affair, thanks almost entirely to the charming actors who are able to create real, touching people out of their cut-outs. The scene where Tom is finally forced to admit, sort-of, his

feelings for Summer feels refreshingly honest, his attempted-casual denial neither stuttered nor delivered, just kind of put out there, and the resulting tension is one of the film's best moments, pregnant with unspoken desire on both actors' parts. Likewise, the initial break-up scene, which has Summer comparing them to Sid and Nancy, kind of casually mentioning that she feels like stabbing him, is hilarious and hurting, Gordon-Levitt's incredulity playing off Deschanel's aloofness in a close-to-perfect approximation of the impotence of a public break-up.

The film's finest moment, though, is its penultimate scene, one whose maturity belies the rest of the film's discomfort. Tom finally has to come to grips with the fact that he won't get Summer back, and her admission that it isn't really that she's flaky about love so much as their relationship never felt right to her is more honest and astute than basically the rest of the film put together. Naturally, it basically immediately torpedoes this tender, heartfelt moment with some more rom-com clichés about fate and love and all that, and a final scene so pat it quite literally sells out the whole premise by itself, essentially replacing the last third of the formula with boy-gets-other-girl-that-renews-faith-in-love.

Had it just fessed up to its clear intentions, (500) Days of Summer would be a fairly effective, if less inventive, romantic comedy that could rest its 90 minutes on the charm of its two stars. Instead, it chooses to be something entirely aware of its faults that freely indulges them anyway, and instead of feeling clever or lively just comes across as pretentious, dressing up old ideas in zeitgeist-y clothing and looking all the more stupid for it. **V**

OPENS FRI, JUL 31

(500) DAYS OF SUMMER

DIRECTED BY MARC WEBB

WRITTEN BY SCOTT NEUSTADTER

MICHAEL H. WEBER

STARRING JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT

ZOËY DESCHANEL

★★★★☆

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Ganged up on

Fifty Dead Men Walking's gangster style sells its story short

JONATHAN BUSCH

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIMMY COMPTON

At one point or another, somebody has affirmed that style and content were not separately defined categories in film analysis, but rather one of the same thing. Discussing plot and character was no different a task than dissecting the filmmaker's artistic vision. Not only were style and content dependent on each other, they in fact were the same thing. But the theory is no doubt a troubling one, especially when a film's style is quite overdone, meanwhile its content is so rationally portrayed. The two become apparently singular in the narrative, and in most cases, is a result of one ruining the effect of another by hogging both sides of the bed.

Canadian director Kari Skogland (*The Stone Angel*) adapts the courageous memoir of a former undercover agent for the British government posing as a volunteer for the Irish Republican Army, with the sole purpose of saving lives of innocent people. Martin McGartland

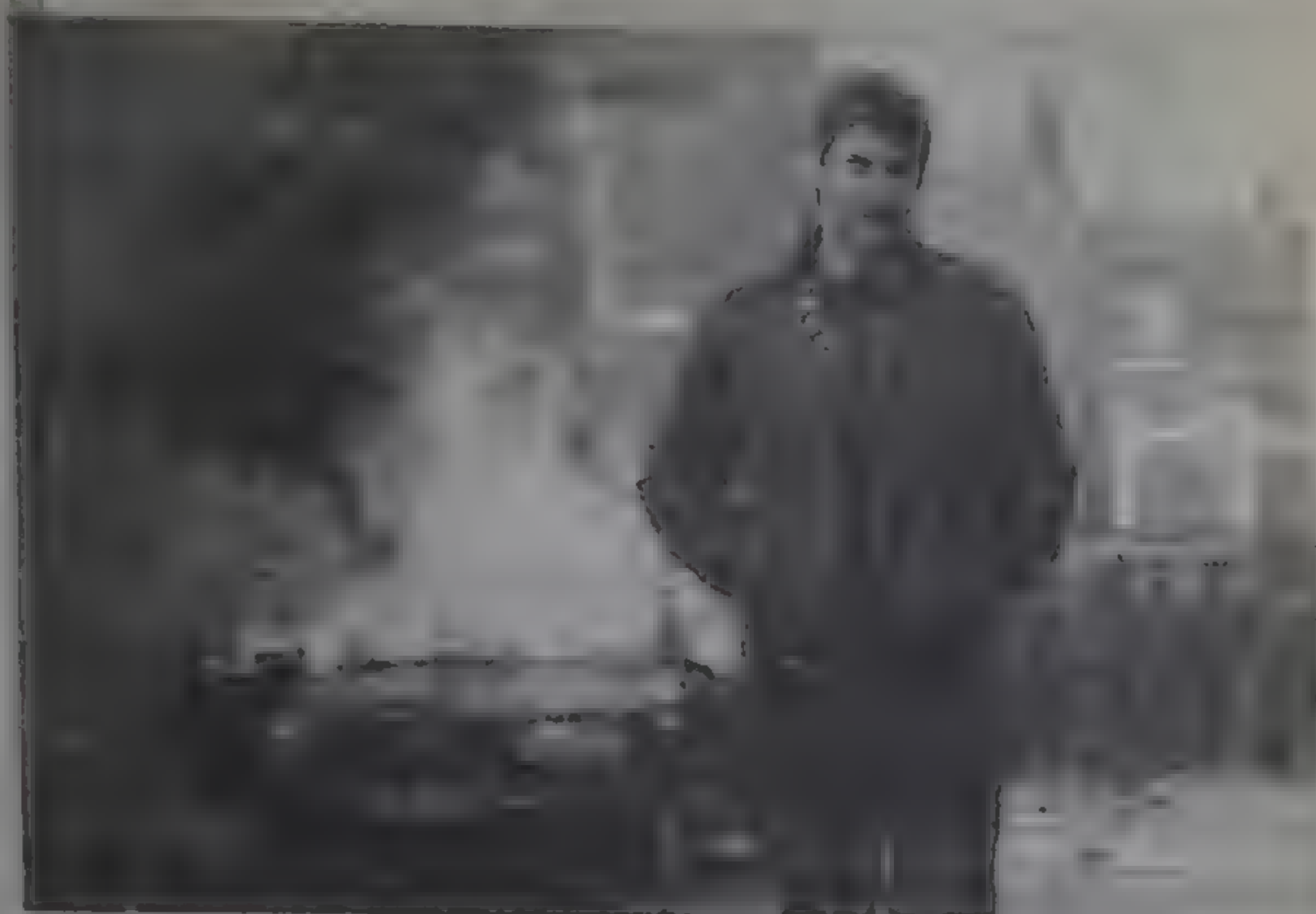
became one of the most useful Belfast-located agents, his social ties to the community providing the trust of his IRA peers but also eventually requiring him to constantly pull the wool over the eyes of friends and family. That's what *Fifty Dead Men Walking* thinks it is about. If it is, then McGartland's testimony shares the stage with a trendy, overeager style in the vein of Guy Ritchie, all the while draining potential for what might have been a real, critical sense of emotion within the social commentary.

McGartland (Jim Sturgess), is a reckless, moustached youth until becoming quickly exposed to the cruel righteousness of his pals of the IRA. His disdain for their actions leads him to be quickly recruited as a spy, forcing him to lead a double life that involves countless challenges but also thrillingly fast-paced adventure. He develops a close friendships on both sides, including passionate-though-ruthless IRA compadre Sean (Kevin Zegers) and British police colleague Fergus (Ben Kingsley); one of them he lies to, the oth-

er he tells everything. Soon he also finds love and fathers a child with Lara (Natalie Press), tying him into a committed home life that is put at risk as the complications of his career persist into a web of heroic deceitfulness.

The fast-paced plot of *Fifty Dead Men Walking* sees each of Marty's motivations a necessity of high stakes and masculine responsibility. Rarely does the film confuse the audience with a cold objectivity that lets down his ethics of character, a facet of traditional action films featuring a jaded hero. The film plays out a colourful stylization, the mise-en-scene dominated by jumpy camera work and smokey, oversaturated locations that seem out of place in what is clearly a docudrama-type script. It's a showy endeavor, one suited better to action-comedies like *Snatch* or experimental character studies like *IRA* prison drama *Hunger*, which showed here earlier in the year.

Skogland's underrated revision of Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel* gave forth rustic farmlands and domestic interiors in what otherwise appeared to be



BIG EXPLOSIONS >> Don't always make crime films work // TVA Films

a straightforward heart-wrencher, her portrayal of romantic archetypes blending perfectly with its cinematic physicality. There was no point to argue for style or content because the overzealous distractions simply weren't there to isolate either notion, whereas *Fifty Dead Men Walking* becomes a contemporary case study for realizing their differences. In a case like the French New Wave, drawing attention to the politics of film conventions is a significant feat; McGartland's

memoir, however, is already political in the most literal and familiar sense of the word, and that appears to be undermined by a hip gangster influence. **V**

OPENS FRI, JULY 31

FIFTY DEAD MEN WALKING

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY KARI SKOGLAND

STARRING JIM STURGESS, BEN KINGSLEY

PG-13

PG-13

DVD >> AT THE DEATH HOUSE DOOR / SCOTT WALKER: 30 CENTURY MAN

Truly individual

Pair of docs examine people who are quite literally one of a kind

Empathy is one of the trickier human abilities to get a handle on. It's one that's called for a fair bit in our day-to-day interactions, and yet I'll submit that, in more cases than perhaps we're willing to admit, it's probably impossible: at best, we can probably extrapolate our feelings from a similar situation, but there are just certain times when an experience is so beyond what we have a right to truly understand that all we can really do is stand dumbfounded, perhaps expressing some kind of reverence, but never truly internalizing exactly what it's like to be that other person.

That would certainly seem to be the case for the vast majority of us when confronted with a man like Reverend Carroll Pickett, the subject of *At the Death House Door: No Man Should Die Alone*, the rawest documentary from Hoop Dreams team Peter Gilbert and Steve James. Pickett served 15 years as the pastor at a prison in Huntsville, Texas. Though he began as a relatively benign figure, founding a choir and offering services for the incarcerated, his job took a decided turn to the extraordinary when, in 1982, Texas once again began applying the death penalty. From then until his retirement in 1995, Pickett served as the chaplain for inmates sentenced to death on their final day; over 13 years, he spent the last hours—6 am until their mid night executions—with 95 different inmates, including overseeing their actual deaths from lethal injection. You see what I mean when I talk about not actually, honestly being able to empathize.

Despite the seeming impossibility of the task, *At the Death House Door* does an admirable job of taking us into the mind



of Pickett. He is, perhaps unsurprisingly, an otherworldly stoic man—the only person to ever see him cry is one of his daughters, who described it as a shrieking, unnatural sound, and you never even see him get so much as misty in the film—and yet as he recalls some of the executions, both live and through a series of audio cassettes he made after each and every time, an honest and deep sympathy for the prisoners, and humanity as a whole, comes through. He's able to dredge up intense feeling with a kind of dispassionate distance

that seems frankly novelistic, as though he's able to comment and consider his feelings even as he's having them. And though he's certainly not a humorous or light person by any stretch—could you possibly be?—he has a remarkable like calm about him, a preternatural ability to let life simply be.

Pickett is such a compelling person, it's almost a shame that Gilbert and James push the documentary further, examining the case of Carlos De Luna, a man who was almost certainly innocent of the crime for which he was executed. Though

it does serve to bring up some interesting questions about racial profiling and the often-lacking certainty in cases that involve the death penalty—and it obviously had a profound effect on Pickett, who had to seek counselling after De Luna's 1989 execution, which started him on to his current path as an anti-death penalty activist—it's really nothing that hasn't been explored before, however relevant the message remains Pickett's story, though, is something else entirely: It is almost impossible to imagine a person like this even exists: the only person I could possibly think to compare him to is a war veteran who never had any comrades.

Though he comes from an entirely different world, Scott Walker is no less a unique figure than Carroll Pickett. Beginning his career as the baritone crooner in a manufactured pop band that set charts and teenage girl hearts on fire in the 1960s, Walker quickly soured on the group, feeling it didn't focus enough on the creative aspect of things. After four self-titled albums featuring a combination of original works, Jacques Brel covers and other songs, he tired of the limelight entirely. Playing out his contract, he put out a few covers albums and a few Walker Brothers reunion albums before retiring to create avant garde pop music that is alternately hailed as sheer genius—as in, some of the 20th and 21st centuries greatest compositions, period—and completely incomprehensible, depending on who you ask. If you wanted a modern analogue, imagine if Justin Timberlake left *NSYNC to record some M.I.A.-style worldbeat rap, then disappeared entirely to make dischordant Gregorian chant records. So, yeah, different, let's just say.

Though Walker is virtually unknown in popular circles, he's basically a legend among music critics and more imaginative musicians, both of whom are interviewed extensively, as is the man himself, in *Scott Walker: 30 Century Man*, Stephen Kijak's career-spanning doc. A combination retrospective and insight into his creative process for the 2006 album *The Drift*, Kijak trades off between exploring his legacy and the man, though with emphasis more on the former that betrays a slight sense of desperation on his part.

Nevertheless, the documentary should be fairly engrossing for both fan and neophyte without alienating either: Walker's is an interesting story even if, like yours truly, his later experimental work goes a bit over your head. (Actually, one of the funnier undercurrents is just how often the admirers interviewed cop to not understanding anything beyond his admittedly beautiful, accessible pop work.)

My main complaint with the DVD release would be the lack of extras: there's a fairly funny interview with an obsessive collector of Walker memorabilia who actually hasn't listened to anything beyond his 1960s recordings and a few extended interviews, but for a man who has developed such an intense cult following—David Bowie has long cited Walker as an influence, evidently so much so he actually executive produces here—there's unfortunately little beyond the documentary itself here. I could do without more of the celeb talking heads, but more insight in his studio work would have been a real bonus: one of the best scenes in the film involves Walker trying to nail the rhythm for a percussion bit that's just a man hitting a slab of meat, and I can only imagine what else he might be up to in the studio. **V**

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FILM REVIEWS

G-FORCE **ORPHAN**

Film Capsules

Now Playing

G-Force

Directed by Hoyt Yeatman
Written by The Wibberlys, Ted Elliott, Terry Rossio, Tim Firth
Starring Nicolas Cage, Sam Rockwell, Penélope Cruz, Tracy Morgan
★★★★☆

Being self-conscious of the ridiculousness that comes with articulating my thoughts on a 3-D movie about guinea pig spies, I feel entitled to a disclaimer: a child may enjoy eating sugar cubes, but that doesn't make them good for him. On that note, don't let the cute furry animals fool you—*G-Force* is not just a mediocre movie; it's also a force for social evil.

I don't think that's a particularly hyperbolic way to describe a flick that shamelessly shills Facebook to preschoolers, and in which an FBI agent is portrayed as a minor villain precisely because he cares about

due process. But the ethically questionable content is less nauseating than the manic presentation style straight out of Neil Postman's dystopian nightmares.

If my peers and I constitute the ADD generation, then the next must be on speed, and it can't be said that *G-Force* doesn't appeal to its primary viewing demographic. It's a long stream of loosely connected action sequences, lazily glued together and carried into the final act by a primary baddie whose motivation is sub-impotent. It wastes no time on development and jumps right into a scene featuring the team escaping from a successful mission. Then they escape from their lab. Then they escape from a pet shop. Then they escape from a house of sadistic children. Then ... well, surely you can guess. Oh, and a lot of stuff explodes, and there is a cut every half a second, and the title sounds like a B-porn. After one viewing, I already need something a lot heavier than Ritalin. Stuck in a seat and flashed endless, frenzied 3-D effects, it feels like an approximation of the Ludovico treatment.

It's also witless, even by the standards of a movie led by CGI rodents. The requisite "cool" (and borderline-blackface) character spouts awkward, unnatural slang clearly conceived by out-of-touch, middle-aged executives. And while I don't dislike toilet humour in itself—hell, even James Joyce made use of it—the least that can be expected is to make it funny in some kind of situational context rather than presenting farting and defecating to be inherently uproarious.

And yet, the film isn't a failure, because it's aware that it's cinematic junk food and it isn't ashamed. Although it has absolutely no ambitions of social or emotional resonance, the production values are adequate and the voice acting is universally competent. It was made solely to entertain kids for an hour and a half and, more importantly, to make a lot of money, and it will most likely succeed on both counts. It's hard to argue with those results, but I still feel a pang of nostalgia for the days of *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Lion King*. Youngsters these days don't even know what they've lost in exchange for rabid and instantly gratifying pacing.

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Orphan

Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra
Written by David Johnson, Alex Mace
Starring Vera Farmiga, Peter Sarsgaard, Isabelle Fuhrman
★★★★☆

Disturbed children who use violence as a means to express their issues are most definitely scary, but not in the way a cut-and-paste horror film like *Orphan* might portray it. It's less likely that an evil adopted child would plot your murder with all the extraneous details in place to frame you, and easier simply to imagine a kid that just one day loses his or her shit on you with a pair of scissors because they wanted dessert before finishing the last few bites of their fig-nut salad. For some reason, a kid is only scary when they have the smarts of Hannibal Lecter underneath the dimples of Polly Pocket. It's especially daring when, get this, the film is actually, maybe, kind of, even a little sexy, like *The Good Son* meets *Basic Instinct 2*.

Just putting it out there.

Kate and John Coleman (Vera Farmiga and Peter Sarsgaard) lost their baby. Well, it wasn't necessarily lost; it just wasn't breathing when they found her, after being born. And in the effort of laying that out, I only now realize the unfortunate but epic irony in the naming of said characters. Holy shit. My heart is currently blazing with the fires of glee.

Anywho, Kate wants to give the love never awarded to her unborn baby to a child that could use it. John and Kate make a date to visit an orphanage to find their very own abandoned child, choosing Esther (Isabelle Fuhrman), a creatively gifted black-haired Russian nine-year-old girl to integrate into their upper middle class family of four. Only something goes wrong; the child is brilliant, vengeful and a little too interested in Mommy and Daddy's sex life. Pretty soon, people start dying around Esther, precisely because she is killing them, although everybody is led to think that Kate is a delusional alcoholic for suspecting that her family is in trouble. Cue one really uncomfortable father figure moment, and usher in the twist ending.

Orphan is only scary because it's so smart that it becomes okay to ascribe whichever

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PREVIEW // THE CITY STREETS

Farewell, Edmonton

The City Streets hits the Trans-Canada Highway

MIKE ANGUS

When Edmonton's the City Streets takes the Pawn Shop stage Friday night, it will be the band's last show before relocating to Montréal. It will also be a wrap-up party of sorts, to celebrate a new record the trio is completing in Vancouver. When I talk to the band over the phone, frontman Rick Reid explains the band's choice to record on the Left Coast.

"It's nice to get away to Vancouver and focus on the record without all the day-to-day distractions. We're working with [producer/engineer] Jesse Gander, who's worked with Black Mountain and Bison. We heard those records and we really liked them. The last time we were here on tour, we decided to stop in to meet him and the chemistry was pretty immediate."

As we discuss the band's last record, *Concentrated Living* and its collection of power-pop "damaged folk," Reid explains the new material that's coming to the surface on the new recordings.

"The new material is definitely darker and harder, in a rock direction. It's got some Sonic Youth influences in there ... it wasn't intentional; I've been listening to mostly R&B, but I think those [mid-'90s indie-rock] influences come through to serve the songs best, to keep them upbeat despite the darkness of the lyrics."

While he doesn't go into detail, he does reveal some of what fueled this album's creative process.

"It was a weird year, and the songs became really dark ... the last song on the record is a light at the end of the tunnel, though; I needed that to be



STRIPPED DOWN >> Rick Reid leads the City Streets through an acoustic performance in Vue Weekly's studio. (Helen Nugent)

there to balance the darkness of the rest of the album.

"[When it comes to dark lyrics,] people often come to me and ask, 'Did that really happen?' and I have to say, 'Well, yes, it happened to me, or to someone I know,'" he continues. "But even then, if something didn't really

happen, there's still truthfulness to songwriting—that's what I like about lyrics, is you have that freedom."

"[Song writing] is the only thing that comes close to playing live. When I'm on stage, I always feel so lucky to be doing it. There are times I can't believe that I get to do this," he admits.

ing is a bit harder for me. I'm always taking down notes, but sometimes I won't write for weeks, then I'll write seven in a week. I haven't figured out why. It can take months to process."

As for the band's decision to join Montréal's thriving music scene, Reid

is very measured.

"We're excited to be moving there. There were a bunch of personal reasons, as well as obvious band reasons. We've been to Montréal a few times and there's just such a strong feeling there. Touring is so much easier going southern Ontario and New York right there."

"No one's given us any flak [for leaving], he adds. "I want to move away cuz I'm in my mid-20s and we have the opportunity to experience something new. No one should look down on that. No one gives you crap if you decide to go to McGill [University] and it isn't like we're leaving Edmonton behind. I may try this for five years, or eight years or whatever. Edmonton is home for us, it's made of who we are, and it's a part of who we are as a band."

I ask Reid if being a band from Edmonton has been an obstacle. Surprisingly, he makes the challenges sound like advantages.

"I think being from Edmonton made us tough," he states. "When you play cities like Toronto or Montréal or Vancouver, people have this preconceived notion of who we are. We had to fight some of those biases but I'm proud to be from Edmonton."

"Our farewell show is gonna be a celebration, we want to have a Last Word feel to it. We're proud to be from here and we want to have a party send off with all our friends." **V**

FRID JULY 31 (9PM)

THE CITY STREETS

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COMMENT >> RECORD SHOPS

The needle drops

Even yuppies need their record albums

Pretty well each and every weekday morning through the summer, while my wife is at work, I take my 18-month-old son for a long walk through the Beach district of Toronto, making a half-hour walk down the hill from our house to the lake front and off to play in some parks that haven't been converted into temporary dumps thanks to our civic workers' strike.

On the walk down, on Queen Street East, in the heart of Toronto's east-end yuppie haven, where people put sweaters on their dogs and your

worth is judged by how much you spent on your kid's stroller, I stopped, amazed. A new shop had opened.

A record shop. A place that sold music. Opening. Not closing.

In the front, there was apparel, books and vinyl. More vinyl dominated the back of the shop, and CDs were simply added on as throw-ins, dotted here and there amongst the shelves of shiny new record sleeves. There were a lot of beautiful Blue Note jazz vinyl reissues in the back; obviously the shop was trying to capitalize on the Beaches

International Jazz Festival which comes to the neighbourhood every July. It's sort of like Edmonton's Folk Fest: a bunch of people with lots of disposable income come to one part of town for a weekend to celebrate a genre of music they don't really care about the other 51 weekends of the year.

The owner told me of bold plans to start selling high-end turntables, as well. My family just got back from New York City—I know that Manhattan isn't the place to go music shopping in NYC, that if you want records, you need to head out to the other boroughs. Still, I was shocked by how hard it was to find a record store

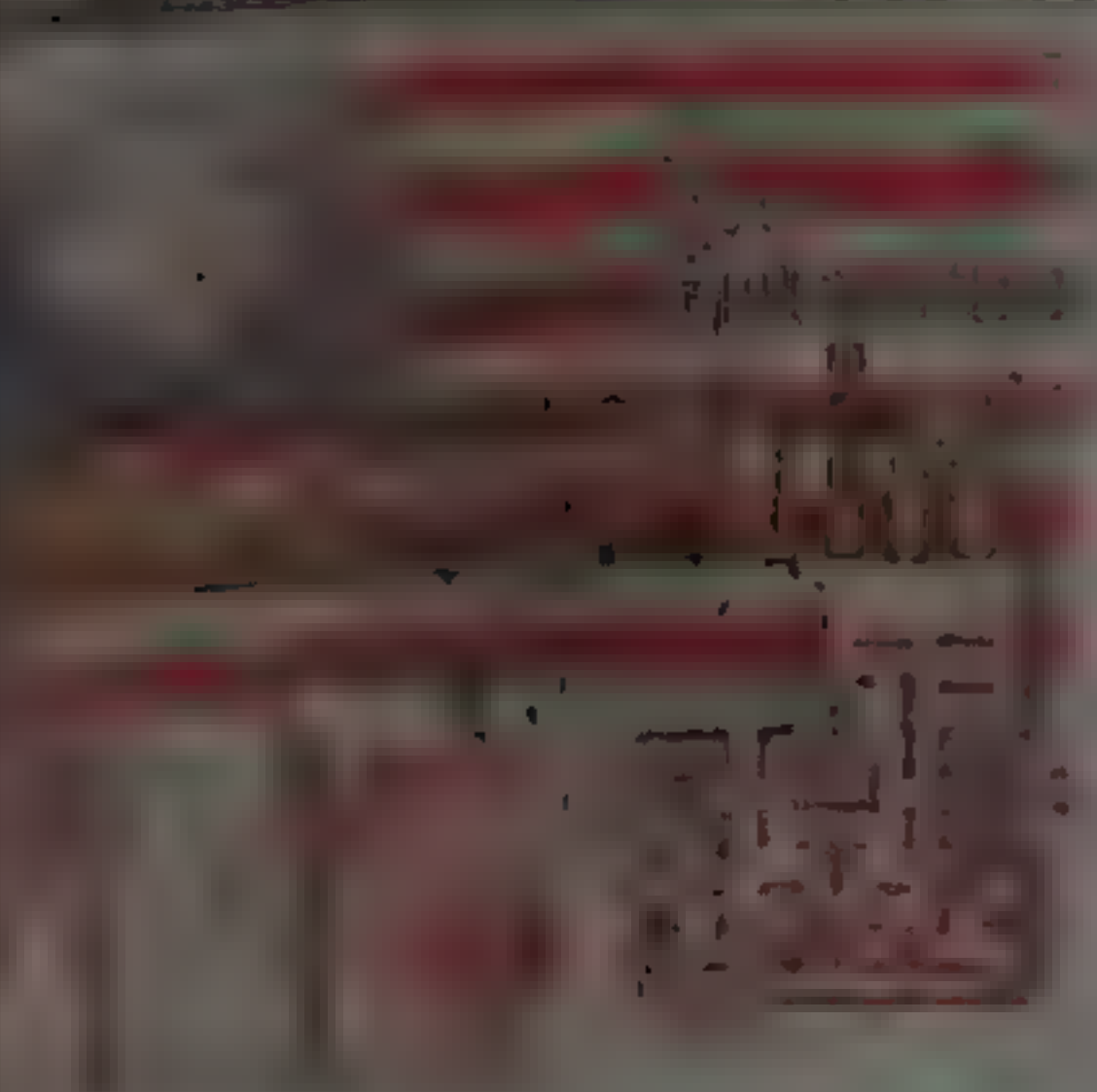
in any of Manhattan's hip districts. We walked through SoHo, the Bowery, street after street of the gritty downtown area, and we found only one record shop, The Cake Shop, which sold music along with cupcakes and sweet treats. The records were placed into boxes and racks in front of the store, and a sign boasted that this was the last record shop open in New York — we did see a Virgin megastore in Times Square, but does that count? Still, The Cake Shop came off as a real hipster-spot bakery that had vinyl around for the sake of ambience.

Back to the Beach, and the area's new record shop. On the racks, the store had

plenty of entries from Universal's Back to Black catalogue and the From the Capitol Vaults collection. Both of these major labels have launched major marketing efforts to promote the re-releases of classic albums on vinyl, with the original liner notes, art and packaging. Even posters that were included with original releases are back.

A new record shop opens, in a spot that isn't exactly hipsterville. I wish the proprietor the best. **V**

Steven Sendor is a former editor-in-chief of Vue Weekly, now an editor and author living in Toronto.



Caledonia's *We Are America* is a record that is both dense and spacious—there's plenty of layers to be peeled back and devoured, but at the same time there's a remarkable clarity to the album's production, allowing for various sounds to coexist within a single song. The record flows and flows, making for a listening experience that can be challenging, but which is also well worth the exploration. This week on *On the Record*, Caledonia's singer/guitarist Steve Gates and pianist Ian Bent discuss *We Are America*.



VUE WEEKLY: What was the songwriting process like for this record? Was everything written before going into the studio?

CALEDONIA: We started writing the songs for this record while on a cross-country tour in the winter of 2007. Most of the record was co-written, though a few songs were written by individual band members. We worked on the songs together in a jam space at our friend Don's for over two years. We did a lot of demo-ing, and two full rounds of pre-production. Each round of recording resulted in refinements of arrangements and of individual parts. Kris [Pope, guitarist] joined the band midway through the recording process, so all of Kris's parts were worked out after we had bed tracks for all the songs. The summer of 2007 we made the connection with Dylan Hudecki, who produced the record, and we flew him down to Halifax for a couple rounds of pre-production that took place at the Echo Chamber and the Echo Chamber in March of 2008. We spent the next year tracking vocals and adding overdubs in Gates's living room—and at [bassist] Zac Crouse's place—and on the road in a boathouse.

VW: How was the record tracked: everyone in there together, one piece at a time or some combination of the two?

C: We really wanted to put the drums to bed. So we performed all of the songs at the Echo Chamber and kept as many instrument tracks as we could. We had three marathon days where we recorded the bed tracks for the whole record at the studio. Then we bounced everything to a hard drive and tracked the rest of the record ourselves at home. When we could, we hired engineers to track stuff with us at home, but for the most part we couldn't afford to work with anyone. We squeaked the record out on no money. With some funding we could have finished the record in about four months. Instead it took us over two years.

VW: What did producer Dylan Hudecki bring to the album during the production process and on the finished record?

C: Dil is so much fun to hang out with. He came down for a few weekends and jammed with us and helped us have fun and stay loose on what had become quite a long process. Once everyone was feeling good, his bent for experimental music naturally worked its way into the mix. Each time we recorded something, we'd send it off to Dil and he'd experiment with it, edit, add cool sounds, guitar tracks and harmonies that we hadn't thought of, and then send it back to us. Often our heads would be turned around by what he sent back. But after a few listens, we always came around to his way of hearing things. It was a fascinating way to work, really.

VW: Was it difficult to reconcile the disparities in tracks like the jazzy piano instrumental "Leaving Ian in New Orleans" and the atmospheric soundscape that follows it in "Same Old Lies"?

C: It was a conscious decision not to put any limits on the creative process. Not everything sounds alike on the record, but all those tangents produced gems along the way. We didn't put limits on where we were going to find inspiration, we just went wherever our guts led us.

VW: There are a lot of sounds on the album, from slow, sweeping rock to reggae rhythms to choppy, punk-rock guitars to beeping computer melodies buried in the mix. If you were to trace the musical road map that led to *We Are America*, what would it look like?

C: Things start with Jamaican ska from the '60s. We really dug how that music influenced the Brit pop of the '70s—the Police and the Clash most notably. Then in the last few years some of us have been enamoured by the Wilco side of indie rock, and others by the Broken Social Scene side. Throw in a few outliers: Tom Waits, Piggy, Boards of Canada and Dylan's recordings with Junior Blue. That's the trip.

VW: You made one video for "Friday Night Rock Song" already, there's a homemade video for "The Plague" on your website and you just received a grant for another video. Do you find it easy to connect Caledonia's music with a visual accompaniment?

C: In the last few years we've been really lucky to meet up with some people who happen to like our music and who are exceptionally talented with video making. The only video we made by ourselves was "The Plague." That was at Kris's suggestion. It was hilarious, and so much fun. Kris is hatching some plans for some more van videos, so there will probably be more before the end of the summer.

VW: Does the music exist in two entirely different places—one where there is simply the record, and another where specific songs are tied to some sort of visual, be it a video or the band onstage?

C: Each song starts with a feeling. We try to hone in on it—give voice to it. Now that we're making more videos and working with visual artists, we're starting to become more influenced by that medium. But this record started in a poorly lit, musty little jam space in the north end of Halifax.

VW: *We Are America* is, at just over

50-minutes long, a fairly lengthy musical journey to undertake. How much consideration was given to the arrangement of the tracks and how they would relate to each other? Was there a mindset of making an album versus a collection of individual tracks right from the start?

C: Whew. This is a pretty lengthy interview. We're most of the way through a bottle of homemade wine now—a disclaimer. Really, though, we appreciate that you gave the record a serious listen.

We wanted to put out a cohesive record. An album, not just a collection of tracks. Not a concept album, by any means, but something with a flow, that makes sense to listen to from beginning to end. We obsess over set lists when we play live. Organizing the order of the tracks on the album was no different. There was no overarching concept or mindset when we were writing. We're still sometimes surprised by some of the thematic and musical details that pop out listening

to the album. Some of the things are, of course, deliberate, and others are pure serendipity.

VW: Were there other songs written that didn't make it onto the album?

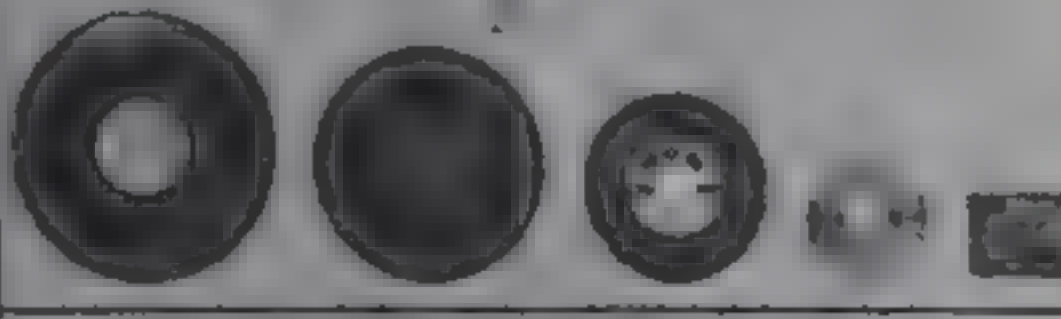
C: We lost one song because of a problem when we were digitally transferring the tracks. A happy accident, really. There are lots of other songs that didn't make the record, but they hit the chopping block before we ever stepped into the studio to do the bed tracks.

VW: Is there anything else you'd like to say about the album?

C: It's awesome. Buy it—better yet, buy us toothbrushes, coffee and deodorant and steal the album from a friend! **V**

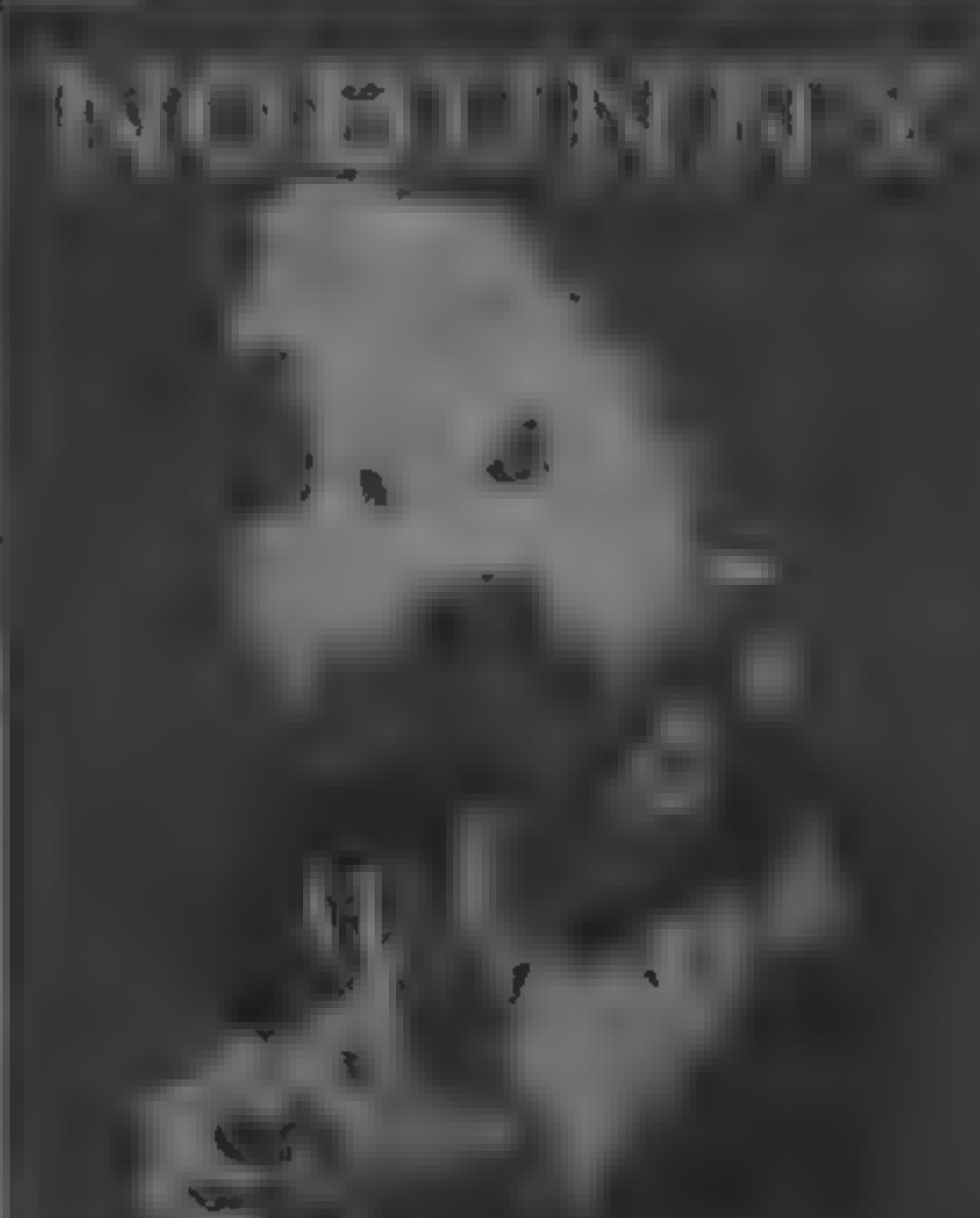
CALEDONIA
MON, AUG 3 (9 PM)
BLACK DOG

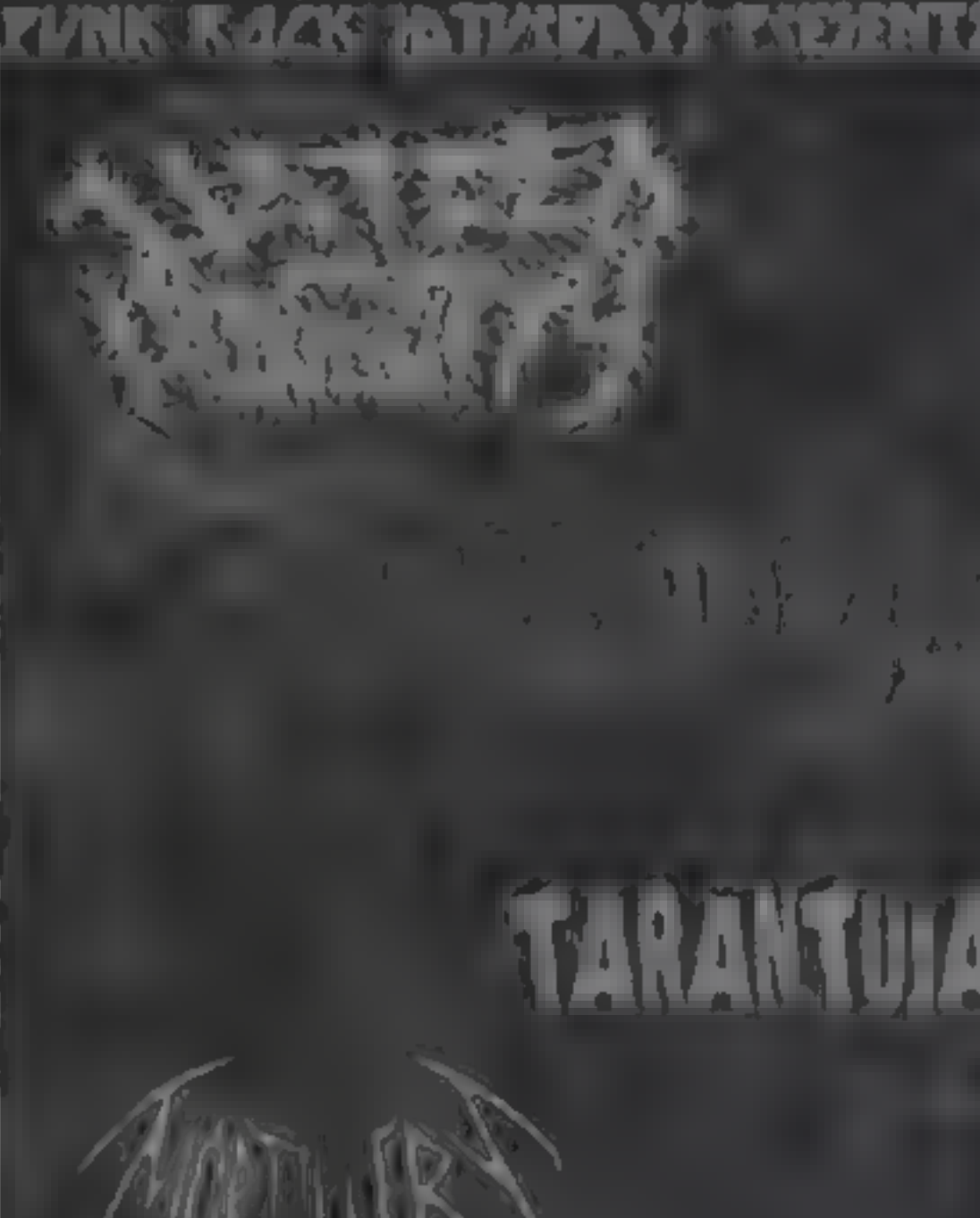
WED, AUG 5 (8 PM)
STATION

FREECLOUD
LPs, 45s, CDs, Tapes
Record Sleeves
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Music Mags
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Classic Canadian CD releases.
McKenna McDowell Mainline, Crowbar
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Dr. Music, Robb Line, Whiskey Howl
Ugly Duckling, A Foot in Coldwater
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The Good Mother, Early Wines
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NEW CITY UPCOMING-UPCOMING-UPCOMING

LIKWID LOUNGE

WOLFE

AUGUST 1
LIKWID LOUNGE

KUNK 5-4-3-2-1 PARTY

TARANTULA
AUGUST 1
LIKWID LOUNGE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7TH
MAXIMUM
RNR
GET DOWN
FUCKING LOTTERY

...AND IN THE SUBURBS

RICHARD & BRIAN
ROCKY HORROR
AUGUST 1
SUBURBS

THURSDAY JULY 30
CAPITAL CITY
BURLESQUE
WITH MUSICAL GUESTS
KELLY
AND THE
KELLY GIRLS
AUGUST 1
SUBURBS

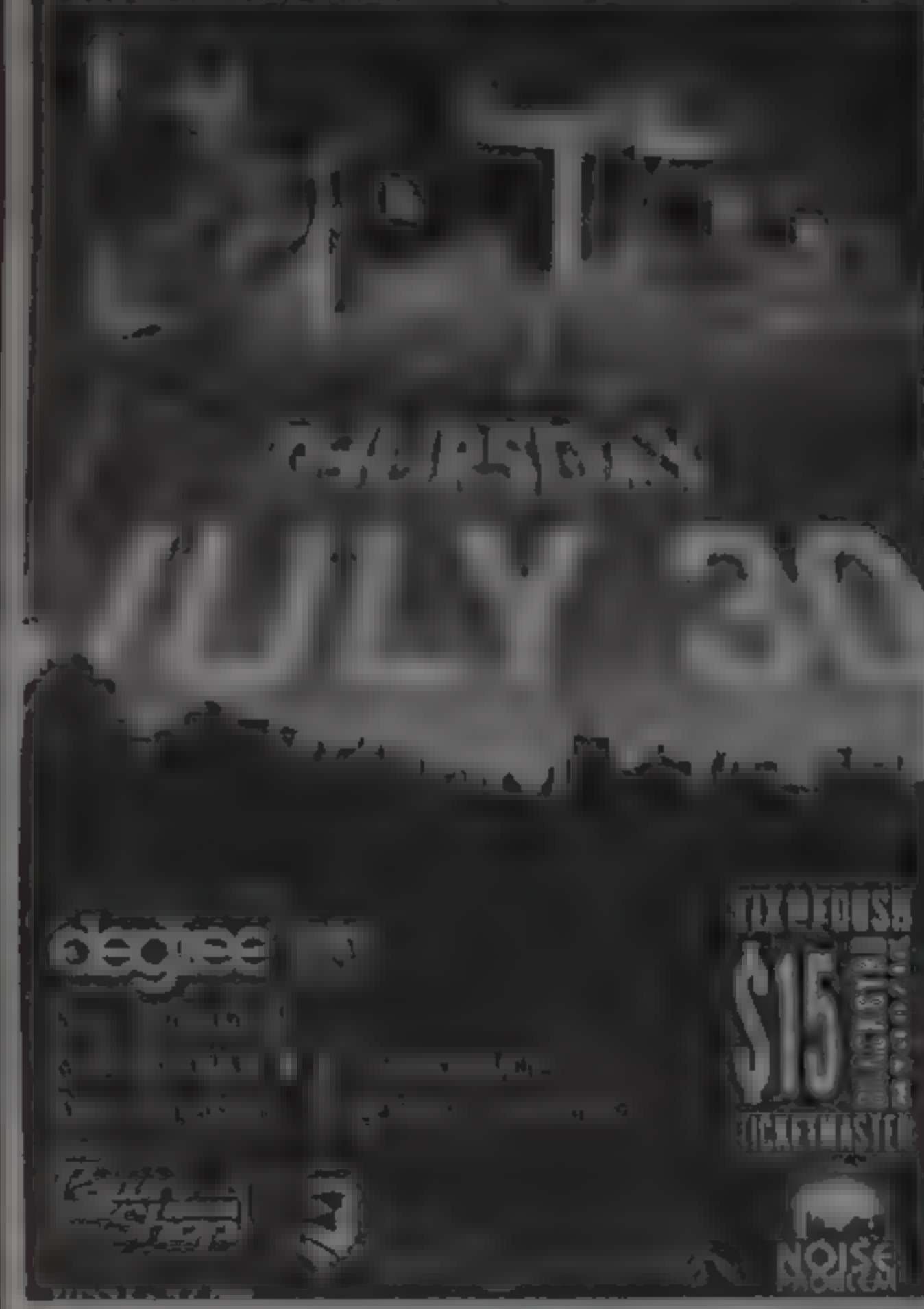
NOT YOUR PARENTS DISCO
NYPD
AUGUST 1
SUBURBS

There is sooo much going on!
For a ton more shows/info → www.newcitycompound.com
check out our new website

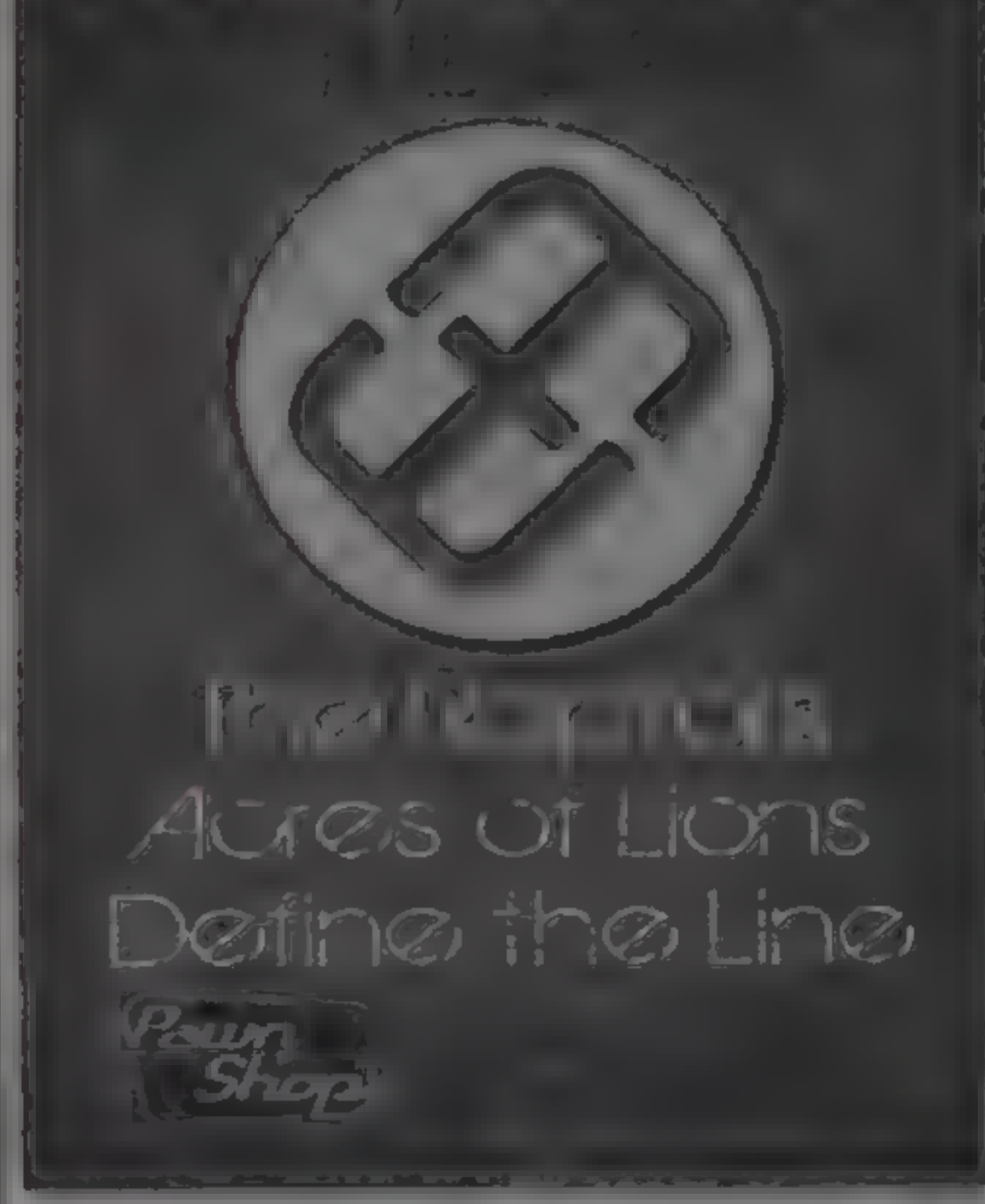
Pawn Shop

10551-82 Avenue (Upstairs!)
780-432-5058

AVANT-GARDE FRENCH ELECTRO



MAPPING THE ESCAPE



www.pawnshoplive.ca

MUSIC WEEKLY

FAX YOUR FREE LISTINGS TO 780.426.2889
OR EMAIL LISTINGS@VUEWEEKLY.COM
DEADLINE: FRIDAY AT 9PM

THURSDAY

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Jason Greeley

AXIS CAFE 10349 Jasper Ave. The Conviction and Daniel

BIG VALLEY JAMBOREE Camrose Molson Saloon: Joe Duffe, Jaydee Buxby, bigvalleyjamboree.com

BLUE CHAIR CAFE Rockin' with Ronnie After Work hosted by Ron Rault every Thu and Fri 4-6pm

BLUE CHAIR CAFE Eddie Patterson with the Stone

BLUES ON WHYTE Maunce John Vaughn

BRIX BAR Chris Velan, Jessica Heine, Kaley Burd; 9pm (door); \$3 (door)

CROWN PUB Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude; 6-10pm

COAST TO COAST PUB Open mic at the pub; hip hop open mic every Thursday night with host Yak Dollaz

CROWN PUB Open stage, Dub Step, Hip Hop, Break beats; 9pm

DRUID Guitar heroes

DUSTER'S PUB Thursday open jam hosted by The Assassins of youth (blues/rock); 9pm; no cover

DV8 Open mic Thursdays

ENCORE CLUB Industry Music and Networking

HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB Mannequin, 8pm, \$10 (adv) at Megatunes

HULBERT'S Jay Anthony Willis; 8pm; \$10 (door)

THE HYDEAWAY Endangered Ape, The Birthday

Cakes, Outdoor Miners, guest;

JAMMERS PUB Thursday

J AND R GRILL AND BAR Thursday Night Open Stage;

JEFFREYS CAFE Erin Ross/

LB'S PUB Open jam with Ken Skoretko; 9pm

LIVE WIRE BAR Open Stage Thursdays with Gary Thomas

MEAD HALL Burtal Machines, Krticos, Sawed Off

NEW CITY Kelly and the

NEW CITY LOUNGE Nobunny, Hang Loose, Geister, Rabies

NORTH GLENORA HALL Jam by Wild Rose Old Time

O'BYRNE'S Mr. Lucky (blues/roots); 9:30-12; no cover

PAWN SHOP Data, Nick Degree, guests; 9pm

RED PIANO BAR Hottest

RIVER CREE-LIVE Enn Haley

SECOND CUP-CLUB Road The Prairie Cats; 7-10pm

SECOND CUP-Varscona Live music every Thursday night between 7pm and 9pm

URBAN LOUNGE Hollow Embrace, Minax, Thbal Garage;

WILD WEST SALOON

DJs

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Escapack Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Big Rock Thursdays; DJs on 3

level-Townse Soundsystem

BUDDY'S DJ Bobby Beats; 9pm; no cover before 10pm;

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

FLUID LOUNGE Girls Night

FUNKY BUDDHA-Whyte Ave Requests with DJ Damian

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GINGER SKY Substance Thursdays; with Urban Substance Sound Crew.

HALO Thursdays Fo Sho: with Allout DJs DJ Degree, Junior Brown

KAS BAR Urban House: with DJ Mark Stevens; 9pm

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Thursdays: funky house/techno with DJ Colin Hargreaves, house/breaks with DJ Krazy

NEW CITY LOUNGE Nobunny, Hang Loose, Geister, Rabies

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ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Jason Greeley

AVENUE THEATRE Beneath the Remains, Enduring the

BLUES ON WHYTE Maunce John Vaughn

BIG VALLEY JAMBOREE Camrose Main Stage: Kal Hound, Tracy Mullar, Gord Bamford, Glen Campbell, Johnny Reid, Josh Turner;

BLUE CHAIR CAFE Rockin' with Ronnie After Work hosted by Ron Rault every Thu and Fri 4-6pm

BLUE CHAIR CAFE The Gralings; \$10

BLUES ON WHYTE Maurice John Vaughn

BRIX BAR White Lightning, The Fast Romantics, Whitewall, 9pm (door); \$10 (door)

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BLUE CHAIR CAFE The Gralings; \$10

BLUES ON WHYTE Maurice John Vaughn

(show); \$10 (door)

HULBERT'S A Hulbert's

THE HYDEAWAY Account

IVORY CLUB Duelling

JEFFREYS CAFE Devin

JEKYLL AND HYDE (PUB) Every Friday: Headwind

LEVA CAPPUCCINO BAR Live music every Fri

MEAD HALL Symbiote Autaric, And Today, Unity

NEW CITY NYPD Parent's Disco; rock & beat

ON THE ROCKS 80-L

180 DEGREES Sexy Friday night every Friday

PAWN SHOP The City Streets

RED PIANO BAR Hottest

RIVER CREE-LIVE Enn Haley

SECOND CUP-CLUB Road The Prairie Cats; 7-10pm

SECOND CUP-Varscona Live music every Thursday night between 7pm and 9pm

URBAN LOUNGE Hollow Embrace, Minax, Thbal Garage;

WILD WEST SALOON

DJs

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Escapack Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Big Rock Thursdays; DJs on 3

VENUE GUIDE

• **ARTERY** 9535 Jasper Ave. • **ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** 7704 Calgary Trail South, 780.432.4611 • **AVENUE THEATRE** 9030-118 Ave, 780.477.2149 • **AXIS CAFE** 10349 Jasper Ave, 780.990.0031 • **BANK ULTRA LOUNGE** 10765 Jasper Ave 780.420.9098 • **BILLY BOB'S** Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd, 780.484.7751 • **BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** 11421 134th Ave, 780.439.1082 • **BLUE CHAIR CAFE** 9624-76 Ave, 780.989.2861 • **BLUES ON WHYTE** 10329-82 Ave, 780.439.3981 • **BOOTS** 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014 • **BRIX BAR** 10111-101 St, 780.428.1099 • **BUDDY'S** 11725B Jasper Ave, 780.488.6636 • **CASINO EDMONTON** 7055 Argyll Rd, 780.463.9467 • **CASINO YELLOWHEAD** 12464-153 St, 780.424.1471 • **CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB** 2021 Millbourne Rd, West, 780.462.6565 • **CHROME LOUNGE** 132 Ave, Victoria Trail • **CIRCLES** 9554-111 Ave, 780.935.7225 • **COAST TO COAST** PUB 5552 Calgary Trail, 780.439.8675 • **COPPERPOT RESTAURANT** Capital Place, 101, 9707-110 St, 780.452.7800 • **CROWN AND ANCHOR** 15277 Castledowns Rd, 780.472.7046 • **CROWN PUB** 10709-109 St, 780.428.5618 • **DIESEL ULTRA LOUNGE** 11845 Wayne Gretzky Drive, 780.704.4444 • **CLUB** • **DEVANEY'S IRISH PUB** 9013-88 Ave • **DOUBLE DEES** 11421 134th Ave, Stony Plain • **DRUID** 11606 Jasper Ave, 780.454.9928 • **DUSTER'S PUB** 6402-118 Ave, 780.474.5554 • **DV8 TAVERN** 8307-99 St, www.DV8TAVERN.com • **EARLY STAGE SALOON** 4911-52 Ave, Stony Plain • **EDMONTON EVENTS CENTRE WEM Phase III** 780.489.5000 • **ENCORE CLUB** 957 Fr St, Sherwood Park, 780.417.0111 • **FESTIVAL PLACE** 10100-101 St, 780.428.1099 • **FLOW LOUNGE** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **FOXX DEN** 205 Carnegie Drive, St Albert • **FRESH START CAFE** Riverbend Sq, 780.433.9623 • **FUNKY BUDDHA** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **GAS PUMP** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **GINGER SKY** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **HALO** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **HAVEN** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **HILL TOP PUB** 8220-106 Ave, 780.490.7359 • **HOOLIGANZ PUB** 10704-124 St, 780.452.1168 • **HULBERT'S** 7111-111 St, 780.428.1099 • **HYDEAWAY** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **IRON BOAR PUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **IVORY CLUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **JAMMERS PUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **J AND R** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **JEFFREYS CAFE** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **JEKYLL AND HYDE PUB AND RESTAURANT** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **KAS BAR** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **KATIE'S CROSSING** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **LEGENDS PUB** 6104-172 St, 780.481.2786 • **LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** 11607 Jasper Ave, 2nd Fl, 780.447.449 • **LIVE WIRE** 1107 Knotwood Rd, East • **LOOP LOUNGE** 367 St Albert Rd, St Albert, 780.460.1122 • **MCDUGALL UNITED CHURCH** 10035-101 St • **MORANGO'S TEK CAFE** 10111-111 St, 780.428.1099 • **NEW CITY** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **NIKKI DIAMONDS** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **NORTH GLENORA HALL** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **O'BYRNE'S** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **O'MALLEY'S IRISH PUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **ON THE ROCKS** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **OVERTIME DOWNTOWN** 10304-111 St, 780.423.1643 • **OVERTIME SOUTH** Whitemud Crossing, 4111-106 St, 780.485.1717 • **PAWN SHOP** 10551-82 Ave, 780.432.5058 • **PLANET INDIGO** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **PLANET INDIGO** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **PLAY NIGHT CLUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **PROHIBITION** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **RED PIANO BAR** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **RENDZVOUS** 10108-149 St • **ROSEBOWL/ROUGE LOUNGE** 10111-117 St, 780.482.5253 • **ROSE AND CROWN** 10105-101 St • **SECOND CUP-EDMONTON** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SECOND CUP-MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SECOND CUP-STONY PLAIN** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SECOND CUP-VARSCONA** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SIDELINER'S PUB** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SOBEYS URBAN FRESH** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **SPORTSWORLD** 13710-104 St • **STARLITE ROOM** 10030-102 St, 780.428.1099 • **STEEPS-Old Glenora** Stony Plain Rd, 780.488.1505 • **STEEPS-College Plaza** 11116-82 Ave, 780.988.8105 • **STOLLI'S** 2nd Fl, 10368-82 Ave, 780.437.2293 • **SUEDE LOUNGE** 11806 Jasper Ave, 780.432.7046 • **TAPHOUSE** 9020 McKenney Ave, St Albert, 780.458.0860 • **UNION HALL** Argyll 99 St, 780.702.582 • **URBAN LOUNGE** 10544-82 Ave, 780.437.6699 • **WHISTLESTOP LOUNGE** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **WILDERBAR** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **Y AFTERHOURS** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **YESTERDAYS PUB** 111, 205 Carnegie Dr, St Albert, 780.499.0295

MUSIC // 27

07/31
LIFE IS A STAGE
VIBE TRIBE & LUNA DANCE FUSION
TRES FIERCE AND TEREZ
DJS SPACE AGE, JOY ONE AND MYO-O

08/01
KING RING NANCY
THE OZZY EXPERIENCE / SELF EVOLUTION

08/02
DESOUZA DRIVE
DIRTY CITY HEARTS / HEAVYSIDE

08/03 TWO NIGHT EVENT!
METALFEST 2008
DEAD JESUS • STRIKER
KILYAKAI • ORDER OF CHAOS
AND MANY MORE... SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

08/13 STARLITE ROOM 5TH ANNIVERSARY
BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH
BEN STEVENSON
DJ DEGREE TICKETS ON SALE JULY 25, 10AM

08/14 UNION EVENTS PRESENTS
THE RED JUMPSUIT
APPARATUS
MONTY AREI

08/15
CELEBRATE ELVIS' DEATH DAY WITH...
CAPITAL CITY
BURLESQUE

08/20 TOUR KICKOFF!
LIONS FOR SHEEP
GRIM BEAT / MICHAEL HAULT

08/21 STYLISH AND CLASSY BEACH PARTY FOR SOUL
EDMONTON'S FIRST
CALENDAR GIRL
PIN-UP PARTY
THE HARLOTS • FRYING SAINTS • THE BENDERS
SAM HATE & THE JACKYL • GRAYE MISTAKES
• THE EVIL HOLLER CERRY GIRLS

temple
OH SNAP SATURDAYS
with DEGREE, COBRA COMMANDER,
DJ BATTERY and WEEKLY GUESTS
08/02 - CDLC:
THE LATEST ACCESSORIES BY CPT. WOLFE & WIR. DEEZ
08/22 - OH SNAP
2 YEAR ANNIVERSARY - BOY 8 BIT
SURELY TEMPLE
THE WEDNESDAYS
DOORS 9PM • \$5 COVER • \$5.50 DRINKS
DJ TRIP, OPTIMUS PRIME & MYTHIC FERNANDO
WildStyle
WEDNESDAYS
HOSTED BY
ED & KIRBY TAFARI
{OF LOCUTION REVOLUTION}
WITH DJS BUADKON
& SHORTOP

WWW.STARLITEROOM.CA

07/30
CHRIS VELAN
JESSICA HEINE / KALEY BIRD

07/31
WHITE LIGHTNING
THE FAST ROMANTICS
WHITEWALL

08/01
GROUNDLED STAR
DESPITE THE BLINDNESS / FOX OPERA

08/07
OMEGA THEORY
THE MITTS
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REBEL MUSIC

08/08
LIAM BIGGS
& THE HYPERMEN
LOCUTION REVOLUTION / RC SYNDICATE

08/14
T.G.I PSYDAYS
TRIBUTE TO PSYCOSMIC
WITH WAY OCCUPATION / SPACE AGE /

08/15
SUBFLOOR

08/21 THE RED JUMPSUIT
LOOKING EAST
JEZIBELLE & SAMNDRIEL

08/22
PASSENGER
ACTION

08/25 FROM VICTORIA
LIZ BEATTIE

ORLANDO'S 2 PUB Sundays
Open Stage Jam hosted by The
Vindicators (blues/rock); 3-8pm
PAWN SHOP McGowan Family
Band (CD release), Boogie Patrol,
mmmBertz; \$10 (door)
SECOND CUP-Mountain
Equipment Live music every
Sun; 2-4pm
STARLITE ROOM (closed)
Drive, Dirty City Hearts,
Heavyside
WINDSOR CENTRE (closed)
Evening with The Moody Blues
with guests; 7:30pm; \$77, \$97
and \$141 available at Winspear
Centre

DJs
BACKSTAGE TAP AND TONK
Industry Night: with Atomic
Improv, Jameela and DJ Tim
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Sunday Afternoons: Phil; 2-7pm;
Main Floor: Got To Give It Up:
Punk, Soul, Motown, Disco with
DJ Red Dawn
BUDDY'S DJ Bobby Beat; 9pm;
Drag Queen Performance; no
cover before 10pm
FLOW LOUNGE Styhus Sundays
GINGUR Ladies Industry
Sundays: Gaza Wine Heritage
Day Celebration with Lexus
Supreme Sound and Invoiceable,
Spyce, Capone, Rocky
NEW CITY SUBURBS
Get Down Sundays with
Neighbourhood Rats
OVERTIME DOWNTOWN
Sunday Industry Night: Requests
with DJ Bo
SAVITY MARTIN LOUNGE
Reggae on Whyte: RnR Sundays
with DJ IceMan; no minors; 9pm;
no cover
WUNDERBAR Sundays DJ
Gallate and XS, guests; no cover

EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE
RZA, Barson, Kinebc; 8pm; tickets
at TicketMaster
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB Jazz
Night; 7pm; \$10 (door)/\$5
(student)
NEW CITY This Will Hurt you
Mondays: Johnny Neck and his
job present mystery musical

PLEASANTVIEW
COMMUNITY HALL
instrumental old time fiddle jam
hosted by the Wild Rose Old
Tyme Piddlers Society; 7pm
PROHIBITION
Monday Night: Soul, R&B, British
Invasion, Ska, Rocksteady, and
Soulful Soulmates

ROSE BOWL LOUNGE
LOUNGE The Legendary Rose
Bowl Monday Jam: hosted by
Sherry-Lee Wisor and Darrek
Anderson; 8pm
DJs
BAB WILD
Mondays: Service Industry Night;
no minors; 9pm-2am
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Main Floor: Eclectic Nonsense,
Confederacy of Dunces, Dad
Rock, TJ Hookah and Rear
Admission \$5
BUDDY'S DJ Dust 'n' Turner; 9pm
EDMONTON KITCHEN
Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G.
FLUID LOUNGE Mondays
no cover
NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE
Daniel and Fowler (eclectic tunes)

MONDAY
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Sleeman Mondays: live music
monthly; no cover Caledonia

BLUES ON WHYTE Carson
Downey
DEVANEY STRIPS PUB (closed)
Songwriters hosting each week;
presented by Jimmy Whiffen of
Hole in the Guitar Productions;
8pm
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE
RZA, Barson, Kinebc; 8pm; tickets
at TicketMaster
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB Jazz
Night; 7pm; \$10 (door)/\$5
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BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Sleeman Mondays: live music
monthly; no cover Caledonia

TUESDAY
BLUES ON WHYTE Carson
Downey

DRUID-Jasper Ave Open stage
with Clint Winters
LB'S PUB Ammar's Moosehead
Tuesday open stage every Tuesday
night; 9pm-1am; featuring guests;
hosted by Mark Ammar and Noel
Mackenzie
O'BRYNE'S Celtic Jam with
Shannon Johnson and friends
RIVER CREE The Venue
Wayne Brady
SECOND CUP-Mountain
Equipment Live music every
Tue; 7-9pm
SEDLINERS PUB Tuesday
All Star Jam with Alicia Tait and
Rickey Sidecar; 8pm
DJs
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Main Floor: CJSR's Eddie
Lunchpad, Woollop; with DJ
Buddies
BUDDY'S DJ Arrow Chaser; 9pm
ESMERALDA'S Retro every Tue;
9pm-12am
FUNKY BUDDHA Whyte Ave
Latin and Salsa music, dance
lessons 8-10pm
GINGUR SKY Basement
Tuesdays: Reggae music; no cover
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB
Tuesdays-Blackout: Electro beats
with Electro DJ's Joust and So
Buddies
NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE
'abily, Ghoul-rock, spooky with DJ
Vylan Cadaver
PROHIBITION Tuesday Punk
Night
RED STAR Tuesdays:
Experimental Indie Rock, Hip
Hop, Electro with DJ Hot Philly
SPORTSWORLD Retro Night;
7-10:30pm; www.sports-world.ca

WEDNESDAY
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Main Floor: Glitter Gulch
Wednesdays: live music once

EDMONTON FOLK MUSIC
FESTIVAL Sarah McLachlan,
Tracy Chapman, Meaghan Smith;
\$70 (adult)/\$35 (youth 12-17); on
Aug 1 tickets will be \$60 and
\$45 tickets available at the Folk
Festival box office, 780.429.3999.
Ticketmaster

FESTIVAL PLACE Qualico Pabo
Series: Aug 5 Anna Beaumont
with guest; 7:30pm; tickets
at Festival Place box office.
Ticketmaster

FIDDLER'S ROOST Little-
flower Open Stage with Brian
Gregg
FOXX DEN The Mary Thomas
Band Wed night open stage;
8pm-12am
HAVEN SOCIAL Open stage
with Jonny Mac; 8:30pm; free
HOOLIGANZ PUB Open stage
Wednesdays hosted by Shane
Buddies

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Open mic
NEW CITY Little Foot Long
Foot, Triple Exposure, Sean
Foster (solo acoustic); no minors;
9pm (door)
PLEASANTVIEW
COMMUNITY HALL
Bluegrass jam presented by
the Northern Bluegrass Circle
Music Society every Wednesday
evening
PROHIBITION Wednesdays
with Roland Pemberton III
RED PIANO BAR Jazz and
Shiraz Wednesdays featuring
Dave Babcock and his Jump Trio
RIVER CREE Wednesdays Live
Rock Band hosted by Yukon Jack;
7:30-9pm
SECOND CUP-Mountain

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BLUES ON WHYTE Carson
Downey
DEVANEY STRIPS PUB (closed)
Songwriters hosting each week;
presented by Jimmy Whiffen of
Hole in the Guitar Productions;
8pm
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE
RZA, Barson, Kinebc; 8pm; tickets
at TicketMaster
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB Jazz
Night; 7pm; \$10 (door)/\$5
(student)
NEW CITY This Will Hurt you
Mondays: Johnny Neck and his
job present mystery musical

PLEASANTVIEW
COMMUNITY HALL
instrumental old time fiddle jam
hosted by the Wild Rose Old
Tyme Piddlers Society; 7pm
PROHIBITION
Monday Night: Soul, R&B, British
Invasion, Ska, Rocksteady, and
Soulful Soulmates

ROSE BOWL LOUNGE
LOUNGE The Legendary Rose
Bowl Monday Jam: hosted by
Sherry-Lee Wisor and Darrek
Anderson; 8pm
DJs
BAB WILD
Mondays: Service Industry Night;
no minors; 9pm-2am
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Main Floor: Eclectic Nonsense,
Confederacy of Dunces, Dad
Rock, TJ Hookah and Rear
Admission \$5
BUDDY'S DJ Dust 'n' Turner; 9pm
EDMONTON KITCHEN
Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G.
FLUID LOUNGE Mondays
no cover
NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE
Daniel and Fowler (eclectic tunes)

MONDAY
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Sleeman Mondays: live music
monthly; no cover Caledonia

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Songwriters hosting each week;
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8pm
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Daniel and Fowler (eclectic tunes)

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BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Sleeman Mondays: live music
monthly; no cover Caledonia

TUESDAY
BLUES ON WHYTE Carson
Downey

Equipment Open Mic every
Wed, 8-10pm
STEEPS TEA LOUNGE
College Blvd. Wed, 8-10pm
Wed, hosted by Eric Terence
8:30-10pm
TEMPLE Live hup
Wed; \$5
DJs
BANK ULTRA LOUNGE
Harley
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Main Floor: Glitter Gulch
Wednesdays: live music once
wave, punk, rock 'n' roll with
Caledonia
BUDDY'S DJ Dust 'n' Turner; 9pm;
no cover before 10pm
DIESEL ULTRA LOUNGE
Wind-up Wednesday: live
reggaeton with InVincible
Touch It, weekly guest DJ
FLUID LOUNGE Wednesdays
with DJ Spincycle
LEGENDS PUB Hip hop
with DJ Spincycle
NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE
DJ Roxa Slade (indie, punk and
metal)
NEW CITY SUBURBS
It with Greg Gory and Edd
Lunchpad; no minors; 9pm
(door)
PROHIBITION Tuesday Punk
Night
RED STAR Tuesdays:
Experimental Indie Rock, Hip
Hop, Electro with DJ Hot Philly
SPORTSWORLD Retro Night;
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Girlfriend isn't better

A lady brought Hucifer to Montréal, but he stays for the scene

BRYAN BIRTLES

// BRYAN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Most of the time Prairie musicians who move away will be interested in "making it," that enigmatic concept that obviously can't be accomplished here, but for the singularly-named Hucifer, singer of Montréal's **Fattooth**, his reason was entirely different and somewhat more typical: he followed a girl from Winnipeg to La Belle Province.

"I had a girlfriend at the time who was taking fashion design at La Salle College and I followed her out there and ended up in Montréal for better or worse, met these guys and I've been there ever since playing music. I don't have the same girlfriend," he laughs be-

fore explaining some of the differences between the two cities' punk scenes. "In Winnipeg there's houses, you rent a house and you've got four bands in there and you smash the hell out of the place and then move to the next house. In Montréal there's jam spaces and you have to be really organized and pay for the jam space. It's a different mindset, too, even when you're playing out. It's a real friend base in Montréal. I don't call it a fan base, I call it a friend base—every time we play out we get another band on and they bring their friends and they turn onto us and show up to our shows, so the shows just keep getting bigger."

In the middle of what would be an exhausting tour for any mere mortal,

Hucifer says that he's barely fazed by bringing his band's horror-tinged punk rock across the country. In fact, he's hardly ever in one place. Being a tree planter in addition to being a musician, Hucifer explains that not only does his job provide good training for not being uncomfortable on the road, but the experience helps with the music as well.

"I'm everywhere, I'm like a gypsy, I'm used to being on the road," he says. "I love planting trees, I love the headspace you can get into—you're really in the moment and I can draw energy from that which comes through in the songs because I have a lot of time to think, or maybe not think and just receive the message."

"I always look at it like, and people like Bob Dylan have talked about it, you



LISTEN UP >> Fattooth's Hucifer plays the role of carnival barker *by supplied*

draw inspiration from the collective consciousness, and I've felt that, I know that. These songs are almost written through that. I love planting trees it's a great headspace and you get in touch with the wilderness." V

FRI JUL 31 (8 PM)
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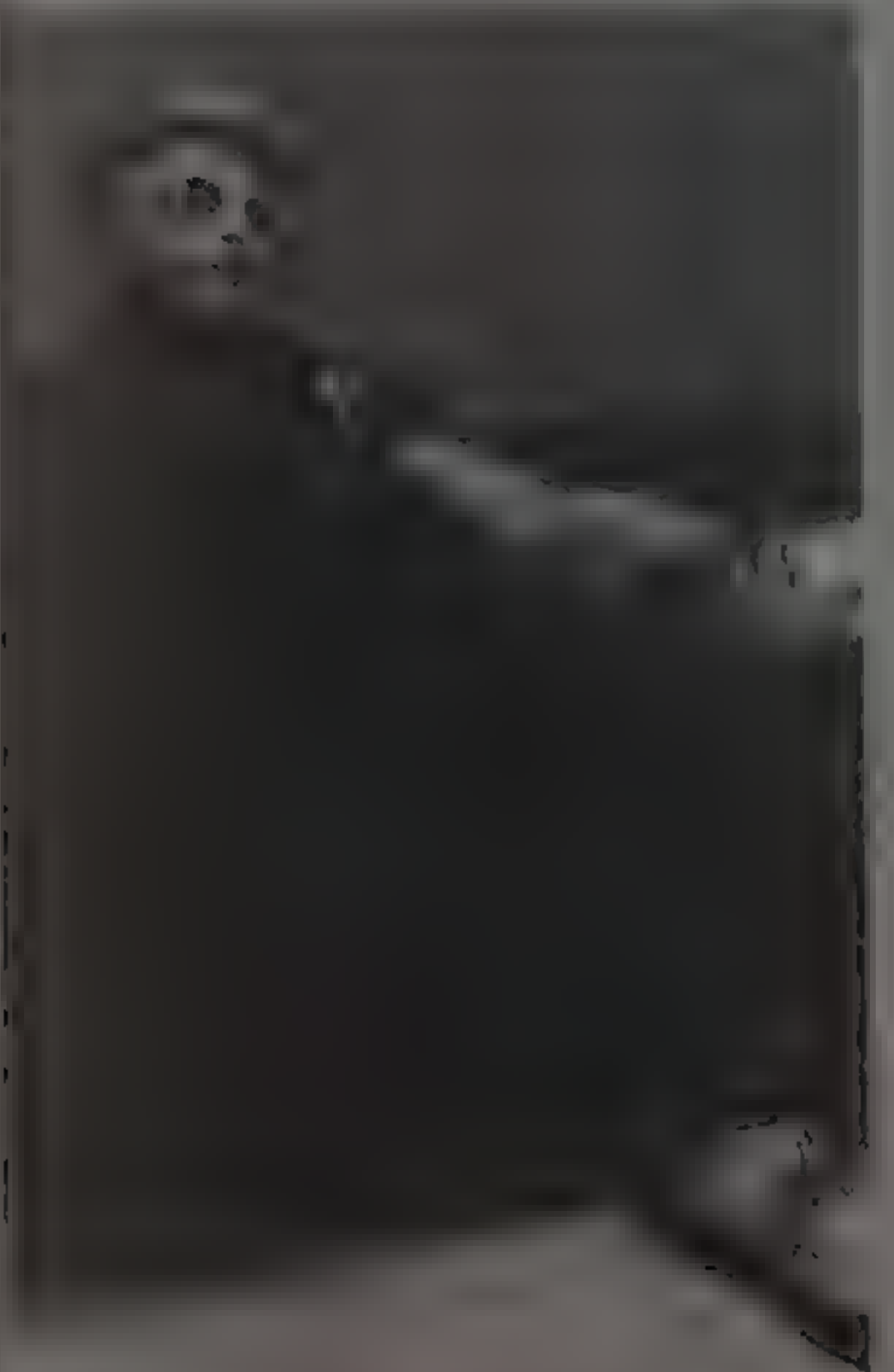
JUL 20 (7 pm)



KIM WEMPE AND CARMEL MIKOL
WITH WAX MANNEQUIN
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB

Two East Coast singer-songwriters—one with a soft and gentle voice, the other's born of rock, but both united in harmonies—are heading westward in one car. Carmel Mikol was at the wheel the last time she paired up with Kim Wempe to travel to the 2009 East Coast Music Awards in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, and Mikol herself admits that the trip may have been tinged with danger, leading to Wempe taking the keys for this journey. "I'm easily distracted when I drive," Mikol says. "This way I'll be free to look out the window and write some songs in my head, and Kim can relax and not worry I'll wander off a cliff by accident."

JUL 31 (8 pm)



LEFT ALONE
WITH THE BRIGGS, THE PREYING SAINTS, O...
SCHOOL POLITICS

Left Alone doesn't really want to be left alone when it stops in Edmonton. Seriously, the band wants you to go to its show. If you like punk rock (and punk-rock singers named Elvis) then this group might be just what you're looking for.

SAT, AUG 1 (12 pm)



DRAW
LATITUDE

No, DRAW is not a band. Well, maybe someplace it is. In fact, I'm pretty sure that if I was to just google it I could dig up at least one band named Draw. But I'm not going to do that because this DRAW is an event. Latitude 53's annual 12-hour drawing marathon, to be exact. Why is it in Music Notes, then? Well, because there's music, too: some CJSR DJs, plus Field + Stream and Swwords will be playing. So go. Listen. Draw.

SUN, AUG 2 (8 pm)



MCGOWAN FAMILY BAND
WITH BOOGIE PATROL, MMMBERTA

Known nearly as much for their beards and curly hair as for their psychedelic folk-rock prowess, it should come as no surprise that the band fronted by the McGowan brothers, aptly named the McGowan Family Band, will be releasing the first EP in a planned trilogy this Sunday, entitled *Psychedelic Tales of the Lawn Gnomes Vol. 1*.

"It's really fun, a concept album. We all got into character and we're all gonna dress up as lawn gnomes," laughs Mark McGowan of the band's plan for the release party to celebrate not only the fact the group's members happen to look like the garden-dwelling statues, but also the band's trippy subject matter. "It's really psychedelic—you know lawn gnomes, mushrooms, a lot of plant life, that's a big part of our music so we thought we'd bring that out in a fun way."

McGowan, who just became a father for the first time, is especially excited for this release because it will be dedicated to his newborn son. As he explains, becoming a father has been even more than he expected it would be.

"I always thought that when I had a kid I'd be happy, but I didn't think I'd be this happy. He's just amazing," he says, refusing to guess which instrument his kid may one day play in his family's band. "He'll learn whatever he wants to learn."

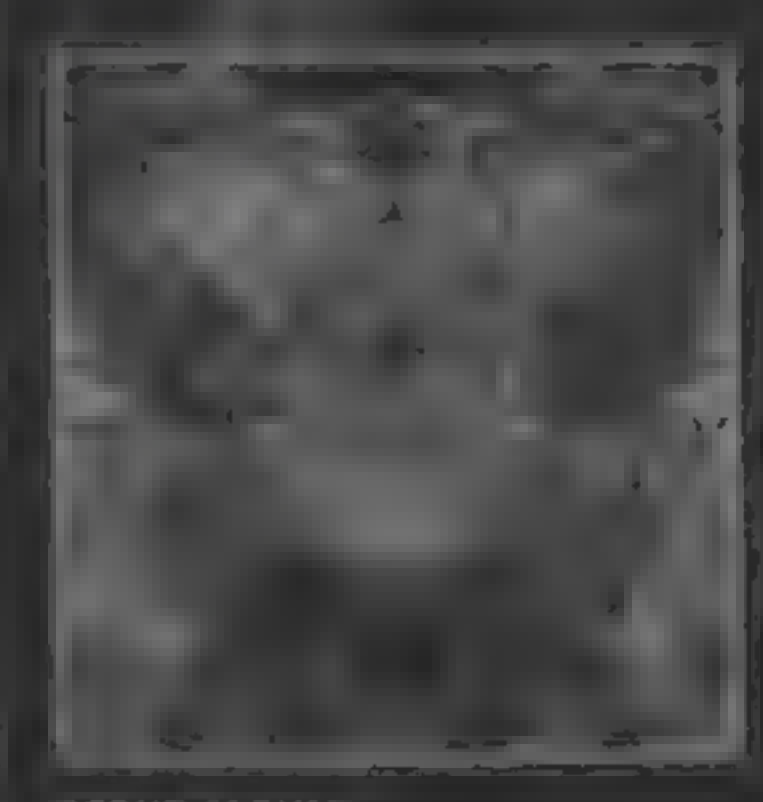
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Hard rock miners

Gold Rush's Rutley goes from experimental noise to guitar-based noise

JAMES STEWART

Formed last summer by guitarist/singer Trevor Rutley and drummer Jon Mick, **Gold Rush** was initially a way for Rutley to experience a more traditionalist approach to his songwriting. After enjoying a more experimental collaboration with nomadic noise musician Holzkopf, Rutley found himself drawn towards creating songs on a guitar he had kicking around, even though he wasn't particularly familiar with the instrument. Luckily, he found a co-conspirator in Mick, who joined forces with Rutley after a brief and impromptu jam session between the two.

"The band started in August of last year," explains Rutley. "I was playing

in a band called Italian Husbands with Holzkopf, and we had about half a drum set at my house. John came over and started banging on it, and the next day he went out and bought a full kit. I was playing guitar a little bit by that point, and I was curious to see what it was like to have that role in a band, so it was kind of born from that. We started jamming together, playing a few shows and getting better and more comfortable. Owen (Strasky, bass) joined later, and he's had basically the perfect personality for the band. He really ties the songs together, and I think that it's largely because he was as inexperienced as we were. We had tried playing with this really great bass player, but he was trained with a jazz background, so he had all these ideas about structure

and other preconceptions that we really wanted to get away from. We don't want to limit ourselves."

The trio took that philosophy even further when it came time to document its songs, forgoing any formal studio recording and instead choosing to record an album with whatever was quick, cheap, easy and handy, which just happened to be the holy grail of many the home musician—a Tascam four-track cassette recorder.

"Our recording philosophy is to do what you can with whatever means you have," he explains. "I mean, I'm always broke, so there's no way we can book studio time. I bought a four-track off of eBay, and I've used it on a lot of stuff since. It's totally possible to record and mix with cassette, and it can

sound pretty good. Eamon [McGrath] came by and showed us how to hang the mics over the drums to get certain sounds and stuff, and that was a huge help. I feel more comfortable every time I do a recording."

I feel like most rock music these days is just really drab and mundane," he continues. "Everything belongs to some sub-genre or another, and no one is really just rocking out anymore. We want to be that. You don't need much, just three microphones, and they don't even need to be that good. You can get some warm, meaty tones on a cassette four-track, if that's all you have at your disposal. There's no need to process everything to death—you just lose that magical quality music should have, that spontaneity."

The take-it-or-leave-it attitude. Rush is also evident when talking about the band's future plans, or to put it accurately, the lack thereof. With plans to move away from Edmonton on the immediate horizon, Rutley acknowledges that the band's lifespan may be a bit one, in one last atypical move, the band facing an uncertain future.

"I'm moving away to work in the Prairies next year, and then eventually I'll be going to school at UBC," says Rutley. "So we'll have to see what happens. It's definitely something we like to keep going, but it's also just that these are just a current incarnation of these songs. Maybe they'll find a new life down the road, but who knows where things will end up in the long term?" **V**

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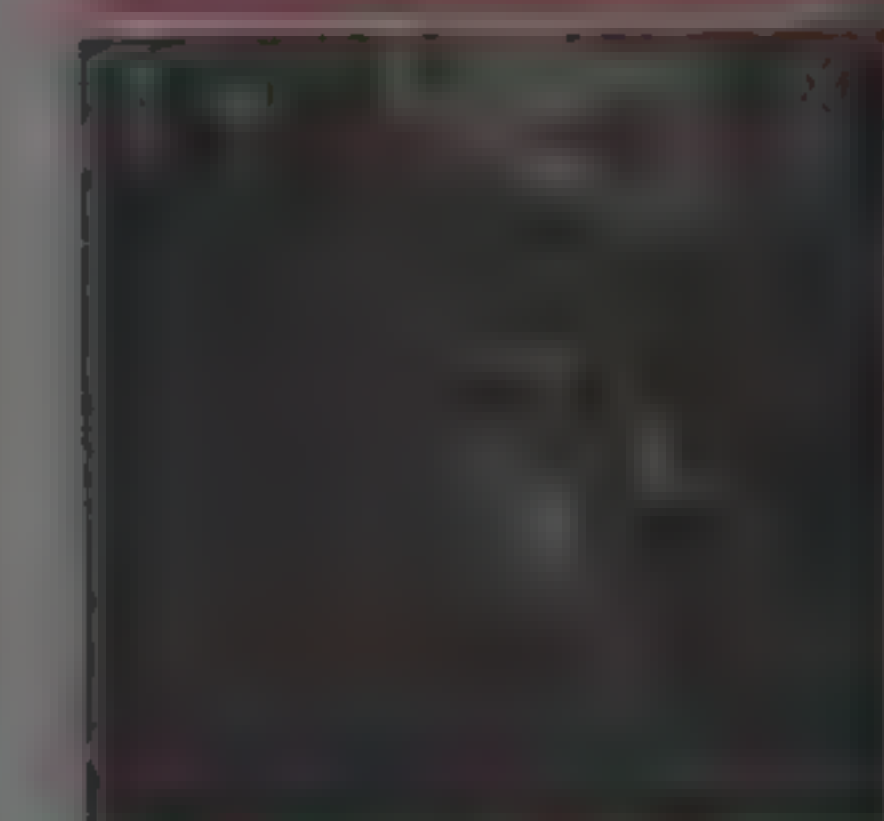
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Mass focus is unravelling on the Net

The most troublesome aspect of the Hollywood doom parade is how quickly the people closest to the deceased exploit their memories, claim ownership over them and wriggle themselves deeper than they belong into their legacies. Take Corey Feldman: a failed '80s movie star with a short-lived childhood bond with Michael Jackson that dissolved around 2001. Instead of keeping out of the fracas like Macauley Culkin respectfully has, Feldman has taken to the stage to express his shaky grief. He plugs a performance of his own at the end. He came to the memorial service at the Shrine Center in an MI-style military costume.

Things have taken on a somewhat mystical air. Get close to Jackson and his essence may reward you. I made a personal decision not to accept requests from other larger press outlets to present my thoughts on Michael Jackson's legacy because I didn't want to benefit in any way

from his passing. I could just see the correlation clearly: as the amount of worth while things produced by a person in their lifetime goes up, so does the value of knowing them and subsequently "owning" moments with them. I have never met Jackson, so I don't feel the need to comment through those channels.

It's weird that the focus has been on Jackson's personal life and illness and less on the unprecedented, nearly instantaneous exhuming of his crypt. "Better On the Other Side" was the first tribute song out of the gate, predictably helmed by P. Diddy only a few hours after confirmation of his passing. The Game raps about MJ and Diddy arbitrating the conflict between him and 50 Cent (someone needs to make a T-shirt out of that), another attempt of his in a long line of implying association through being extremely referential of not just Jackson but his

Even worse than that, Chris Brown croons along with has-beens Boys II Men, about crying angels and uses someone else's demise to bounce back from an assault charge. I can't imagine Jackson would want a proven abuser in his corner. It's theatre for the self and it's creepier than anything to do with hyperbaric chambers or pet monkeys.

People give physical things away in their wills when they die, but what is it about

celebrity death that causes people to clamour and scrape for morsels of fame, an ephemeral object? It's so transparent that even the propagators must be aware of how it looks to the unassuming outsider. I think a lot of it has to do with the dilution of the talent pool and the wider definition of what a celebrity is.

Now that people with blogs are becoming as famous as the subjects they choose to talk about, things such as the circle of life are funnelled through the same microcosmic feed. MJ's death might be the last time the majority of the world will have its minds on the same subject, but it won't be the final expiration we find out about from Facebook status updates and text messages. The amount of fame in the ether for people to grab is getting thinned out, so, as a result, people have to get it where they can. And if it's from a golden cassette, so be it.

New York artist and photographer Dash
Snow recently died from a heroin over-
dose. Snow's death was first discovered

through his IRAK graffiti crew's Twitter page. He's currently being irresponsibly championed as a martyr for the Lower East Side by the token of his (apparently) genuine "don't-give-a fuck" attitude. His art and conceptual stance has been co-opted not only by his friends, but also by people who want ownership of the true, real danger of a hedonist lifestyle. Anyone who has ever come close to him can absorb his energy.

The thing that strikes me about this age of instant data transfer is that the Internet is becoming right about these kinds of things for the first time. It used to be frowned upon to reference Internet sites or take credence in anything you heard online. Death is legitimizing free online media and these portals could be dangerous for people who can manage fake information in believable ways. Fortunately, there are good-hearted people who can function without the hunger for accumulating value. NBA Player Ron Artest proves that with his tribute, "Michael Michael."

Rapped and sung, Artest's performance is so childlike and honest in its tearful re-

membrance that one can't possibly find careerism or guile in it, even if it does come from a guy who's famous for beating up some unruly fans during one of his games. He weirdly paeans, "I hope to see you next year." When he suits up for the NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers, he'll be changing his number to 37 to commemorate the amount of weeks *Thriller* was number one on the charts. Sure, he wasn't exactly singing "Bad" from the rooftops before, but something about his song seems earnest. Perhaps the value theory doesn't affect people who already have a measure of success but aren't native to the same section of the entertainment world.

It's doubtful that celebrities will ever reach the current level of media fascination and critical acclaim again. The value of owning part of a celebrity ("I shared a cab with...") will continue to go down as the amount of celebrities goes up until equality exists. Will this please the green-tinted masses? Or will they long for a world where one man bore the brunt of focus that we could all soon share?




Saturday, August 1


Sherry-Lee & Her Handsome Fellas



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Coming through

Clutch turns to an old friend to record its latest

BRYAN BIRTLES

PHOTOGRAPH BY [illegible]

When Maryland-based band Clutch was getting ready to record a follow up to 2007's *From Beale Street to Oblivion*, the group didn't have to look very far. Turning once again to legendary hardcore musician and producer J. Robbins—who recorded Clutch's 2005 record, *Robot Hive/Exodus*—the group was able to stay close to home while recording.

"He's from our hometown ... his studio is out of Baltimore. Logistically it was just easier for us at that time to make the album close to home," explains Clutch bassist Dan Maines, mentioning that Robbins was also at the helm of a record by the Bakerton Group, a Clutch

side project. "He's very easy for us to work with, just his style—he's a very patient person and he's not the kind of person that's going to be throwing ideas at you constantly but when he decides to throw his input into a song it's usually input that we will use 100 percent of the time. He's ... not just a musician but someone who's coming from the same background that we did so his musical vision in a lot of ways is very similar to ours."

Indeed, Robbins's background as a member of Government Issue and Jawbox, two legendary D.C. hardcore outfits, is what first attracted Clutch to the producer. When Clutch started in 1991, Jawbox was one of the biggest bands on the scene, and a major influence on the nascent Clutch.

"Jawbox is one of the first bands that I knew of from our area that was playing similar music and was fortunate enough to have signed a contract with a major label," Maines says, referring to the 1993 deal that saw the band sign with Atlantic. "They were very big in the local D.C.-Maryland scene at that time and we were fortunate to get some shows opening up for them when we were first playing out. They were an inspiration for the band and we knew him from back then and as time went on he drifted more towards the recording aspect of music and the first time that we had worked with him in a recording situation was *Robot Hive/Exodus* and that went really well in our eyes."

Making a change from the way the



FROM BEALE STREET TO THE WEST >> Clutch did less preparation than usual when recording the band's latest album, writing much of it in the studio // Sup. 13

band has recorded albums in the past, Clutch went into the studio with plenty of work to be done on the songs. Instead of writing and then road testing the songs, *Strange Cousins from the West* saw the band writing in the studio, experimenting with different sounds and textures and generally taking more creative chances.

"I'd say close to half of the songs were more or less put together in the studio. That kind of open endedness going in lends itself to being a bit more creative on each song as a whole. Instead of trying to make a complete version of the song that's already existing in your head, experimenting a bit more in the studio and throwing ideas around and

seeing which ones work and which don't," says Maines, explaining that he enjoys the experimental tack. "You can go into it in one of two different ways: you can take a positive approach and say, 'This is going to give us a chance to do some more experimentation,' or you can go with a negative approach of, 'We don't have enough songs,' feeling unsure of whether you'll be able to produce what's needed." V

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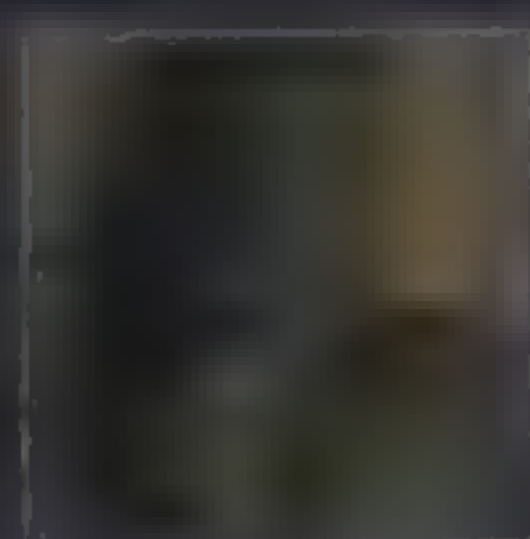


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Diff'rent stripes

This duo is cut from its own cloth



TWO OF A KIND >> Little Foot Long Foot draws its sound from Joan Smith's semi-hollow body guitar and Isaac Klein's hard-hitting drumming // Supplied

JOAN SMITH
CAROLYN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

If you're looking for the soft and cuddly, if you're looking for the shy love song, you'll have to look elsewhere. "We're not your typical Little Foot Long Foot."

There's enough relationship songs out there," laughs Joan Smith. "If I ever do anything about relationships, it's always in a negative context—because I just think that at this point I

am incapable of writing a love song. I've come to accept this. I tried to write one once and I never played it in public. Ever. Because it just made me want to barf."

What rocks singer-guitarist Smith and drummer Isaac Klein's music world is something a little more straightforward: sincere rock 'n' roll coupled with lyrics that rail against insincerity (haughty hipsters and counterfeit cowboys be warned).

"We're certain people that don't

take ourselves seriously, you know. Obviously, I have a lot of beefs with certain things—as anyone would be in the music industry or if you're just dealing with annoying people everyday—but I find that the best way to deal with things that annoy you is sort of turn it into something light-hearted. And also try not to be pretentious," she explains. "Pretentiousness just friggin' kills me, and it's a lot of what Toronto's about. People take themselves way too seriously most of the time there. So if I'm writing something or performing, I try to have an out-of-body experience and just make sure ... like, do the pretentiousness check. Like, if I was watching me, I wouldn't be annoyed."

Little Foot Long Foot is currently halfway through its cross-Canada tour in support of its first full-length, the aptly titled *Harsh Words*, and things are beginning to get a little blurry. Staying with friends along

the way helps the sanity levels, and if Smith and Klein ever wake up and forget what town they're in, they can always visit their tour blog (and so should you—there's a funny video log about swearing in Halifax), as it seems that travelling with just two band members leaves a little more downtime for updates.

But having two members—one on drums and one on guitar—also brings on countless comparisons to another little band.

"If I hated the White Stripes, I would probably get really tired of them, but honestly, when they came out a few years ago, I was kind of looking for a band that sounded like them, and then suddenly they were there," Smith says. "I love Jack White; I think he's a genius, so I don't really have a problem with it that way. I know it's a lot more because just aesthetically, yes, there are two of us, and we're a boy and a girl, la, la, la. But it's certainly a lot better than, 'Oh, you're the Carpen-

ters!' Out of any two-member band, I think that I would prefer to be compared to them. So it's fine with me."

The comparisons may be apt aesthetically and even, at times, sonically, but Smith and Klein are so honest in their delivery that you would never want to call them derivative. The band takes its many influences—that range from edgy blues to country—and truly own them. Smith only uses one guitar, a '60s Yamaha semi-hollow body. That coupled with Klein's hard-hitting drum style, is what she credits Little Foot Long Foot's sound.

"I think that everything just came from this guitar, and every time I play another guitar, it just doesn't sound the same," she admits. "I just can't get through a set if I can't play this guitar."

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ALBUM REVIEWS

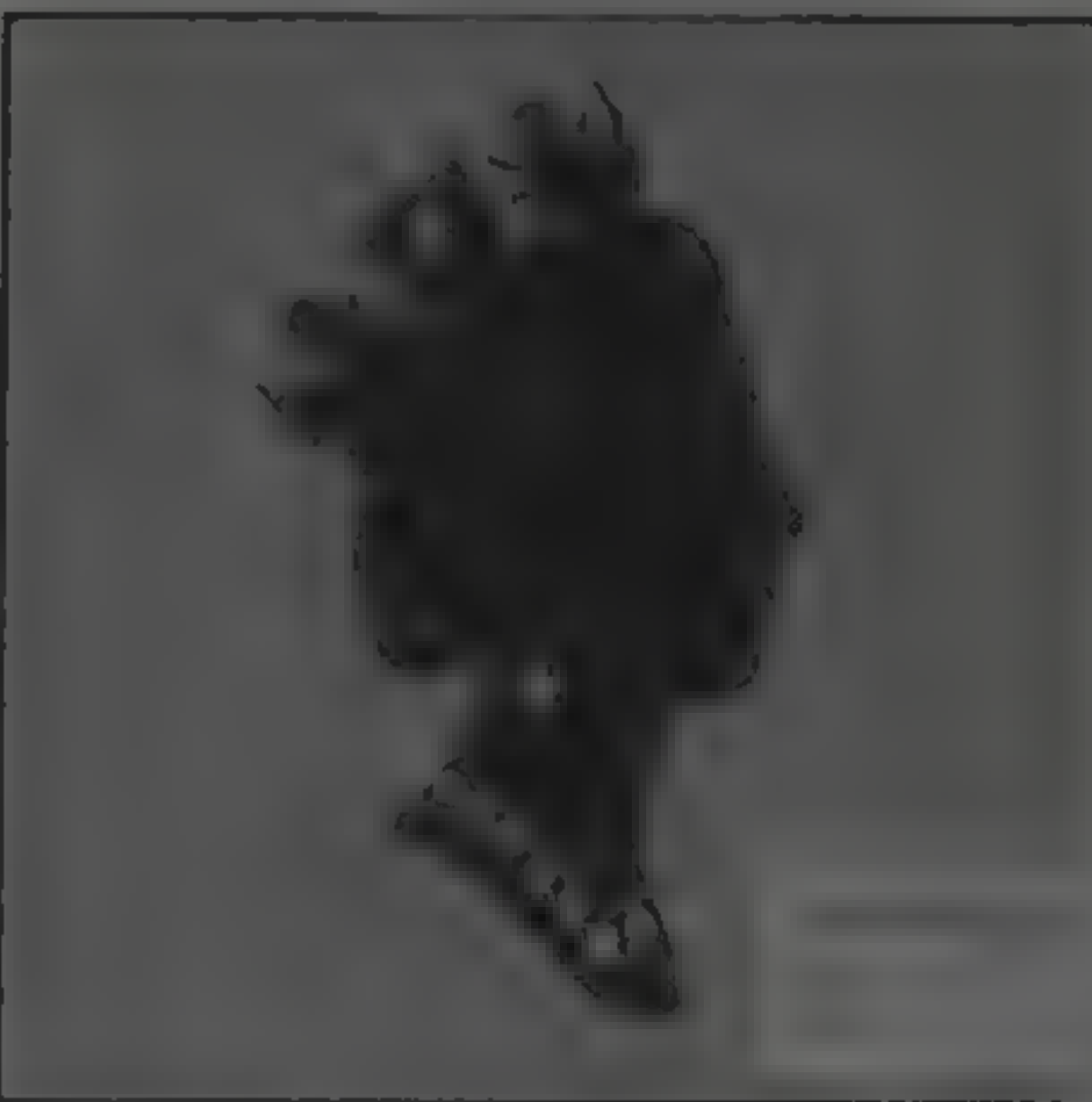
New Sounds

Dan Mangan

Nice, Nice, Very Nice

(The Under Mind)

★★★★☆



EDEN MUNRO

edem@vancouverweekly.com

Dan Mangan's latest record, *Nice, Nice, Very Nice*, has a way of sneaking up and rearing its head with very little warning of what's to come. The first song, "Road Regrets," starts up with some breezy sounds blowing in, only to be overtaken by a confident acoustic guitar, strumming its way towards the highway as Mangan gets the journey rolling.

Mangan's voice has gained some weight in the years since *Postcards and Daydreaming*, his full-length debut. Not that his vocal chords were anything to be ashamed of in his earlier days, but he's become just a bit more graveled today, and it suits him and his words well, allowing for a delivery that is lived-in and worn around the edges in just the right ways. There's a confidence in the singer's voice as he leads his collaborators through a landscape that is sometimes welcoming, other times dodgy, but always unified.

And as the album carries on, it's remarkable how Mangan's songs travel across a spectrum of sounds all the while forming a cohesive identity that is very much the sum of the parts. There are no extreme turns here, but slight stylistic shifts abound—within

the first four songs there's the near-sea-shanty swelling of "Robots," the slow, sweeping rise of "The Indie Queens Are Waiting" and the country-gone-city bass thump of "Sold," while later on there's the saloon-rambling starts and stops of "Some People" and the plaintive contemplation of "Pine Branches."

Through it all, *Nice, Nice, Very Nice* is grounded by the lo-fi sounds that hide somewhere beneath the instruments, emerging in glimpses but seemingly always near, from the singalong on "Robots" to the frenetic clapping that wraps up "Sold" to the foot stomps on "Tina's Glorious Comeback." The various sounds root the album in a workman-like esthetic, giving it the feel of a homemade construction, something built with love and effort instead of dollars and polish.

At the same time, though, the role of the lyrics should not be discounted; Mangan has a way of reeling off lines that are deceptive in their complexity. A song like "Robots," with its chorus of "Robots need love too / They want to be loved by you," reveals much more than just an interest in technological intrusions. On the surface it seems that the song may be a tale off battling it out against those intrusions for time that once seemed to be for the wasting—and maybe it is, to a point—but deeper down are thoughts of discovery, as Mangan discovers that technology has snuck up and wrestled his time away without his even knowing it until the match was over.

Ultimately, it's that ability to write lyrics that beg for some consideration of their meanings, combined with the ability to deliver those words in a way that is compelling and which raises the emotions to the forefront of the songs—"Basket" does just that, with Mangan railing against the unjust wears and tears of aging, his voice rising and cracking to the point of breaking as he envisions the struggle to not lose the abilities that one has so long depended upon—that makes *Nice, Nice, Very Nice* so captivating a listen. **V**

Rough Skelators

Experimental Redneck
(Independent)

★★★★☆



Some people know their way around the fashion world. Rough Skelators sure do, and their ronto-based sound probably also have a stellar collection too, full of obscure early records cuts, Nick Drake-type eerie mournful space rock and loads of Star. They've used it all as inspiration for *Experimental Redneck*, plodding of sci-fi and rootsy washes, hisses and creaks, and bent it into a soundtrack for lysergic late night marinating in insignificance and frustrated longing. The song from percolating beats gussied up rolling surf guitar, a loose '60s rock vibe, shaky early '60s rock, ethereal meandering folk spilling industrial experimentalism and anything in between. It's a spooky, tapestry that's as appealing as it can get.

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE

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Ohbijou
Beacons
(Last Gang)
★★★★☆



So what do you do when you're a rocking female-fronted band on Last Gang Records, home to that other cool, female-fronted band that launched said record label in the first place? Toronto's Ohbijou went ahead and released a gorgeous collection of hushed vocals, piano and strings, that's what. *Beacons* is a product of the band's indie band residence at Banff Centre for the Arts and the spacious arrangements have more in common with Emily Knives Don't Have Your Back than Meric's angular electro-rock. This is pop of the gentlest kind, though as with all great pop, these songs will get their hooks in you.

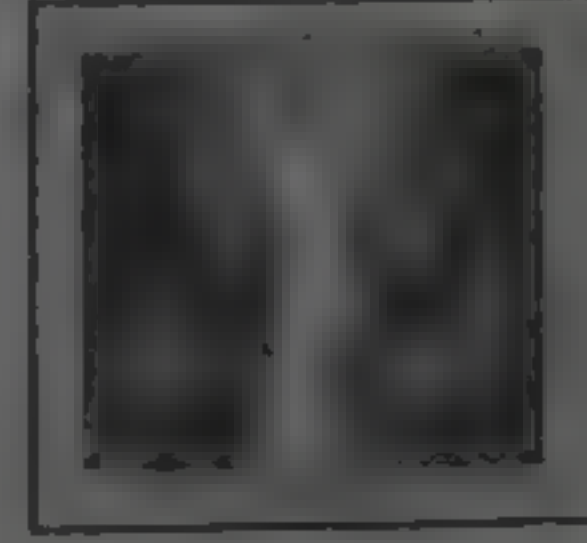
MIKE ANGUS

//mike@vancouverweekly.com

Ray Davies and the Crouch End Festival Chorus

The Kinks Choral Collection
(Universal)

★★★★☆



The back of the album proudly proclaims, "Come Kinks song you've never heard them before." Oh, the original rock 'n' roll sound there—as interpreted by Ray Davies and his band, anyway—but over top is a expansive choir. It's epic, though probably not quite in the way Davies meant it. Still, the choir is not wasted by any means making its presence known throughout.

EDEN MUNRO

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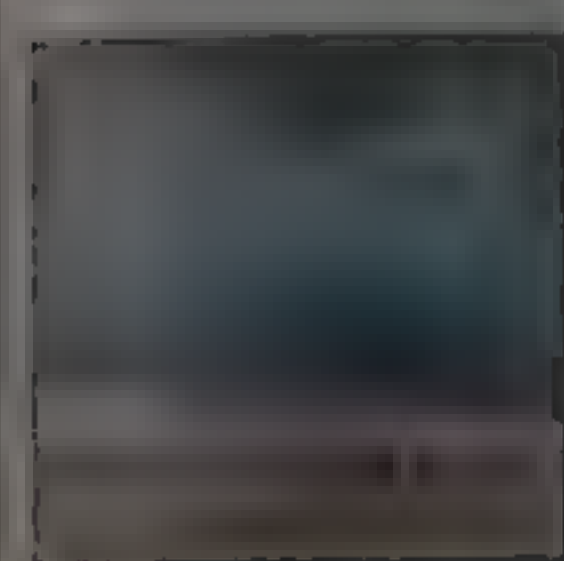
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LMFAO
Party Rock
(Capitol)
★★★★☆



LMFAO actually thanks its MySpace friends and Twitter followers in the liner notes of Party Rock. Were any other group to do something like that, it might seem sort of hollow, but LMFAO's entire aesthetic of LMFAO is specifically towards the instant gratification of social media—the liner notes run vertically and look almost exactly like a MySpace page, and the band is called LMFAO—it doesn't seem out of place. Ultimately, the disc lives up to its name, with party anthems designed for both maximum sweat and ass shaking, coupled with lyrics about showing off titties. It's a little, um, empty, but all kinds of awesome. Instant gratification is good now, and it'll be good when you do it again next Friday night too.

Jason Plumb
Wide Open Music—Songs for Saskatchewan
(Newman)
★★★★☆



Somewhere outside Moose Jaw, at a crossroads where the clock has perpetually paused in a sweaty Saturday summer evening, there's a roadhouse. Inside the ramshackle building, neon beer signs peppered with unlit letters buzz over the pockmarked bar, swathed in deep-red vinyl line two of the walls, interrupted only by a huge blinking jukebox. The other wall conceals backstage, where the owner of a ramshackle stage presiding over a cramped dancefloor. And in that roadhouse, Jason Plumb & the Willing is the house band, well-represented on the jukebox, along with Cancon-enabled favourites like the Guess Who and Bachman-Turner Overdrive and an assortment of rockers and Nashville types spiritedly resisting disco, punk, new wave, pop, prog and any other musical permutation that's threateningly progressive. Plumb fills the room, cheered on by fans who understand what he means when he invokes "the road" and "home." It's classic, bloated, and it's got a lot of heart, and it's got a lot of skill, and depending on your tastes, you'll either love or loathe it.

Blackfield
Snow Blindness Is Crystal Antz
(Flemish Eye)
★★★★☆



Glitchy instrumental gold. Chad Van Gaalen's electronic alter-ego is not easy to dig into, but it's well worth the effort. Turn it on, turn out the lights, close your eyes and trip away. 'Nuff said.

ALBUM REVIEWS

Medicine Head
Dark Side of the Moon
(Dandelion)
Originally released: 1972



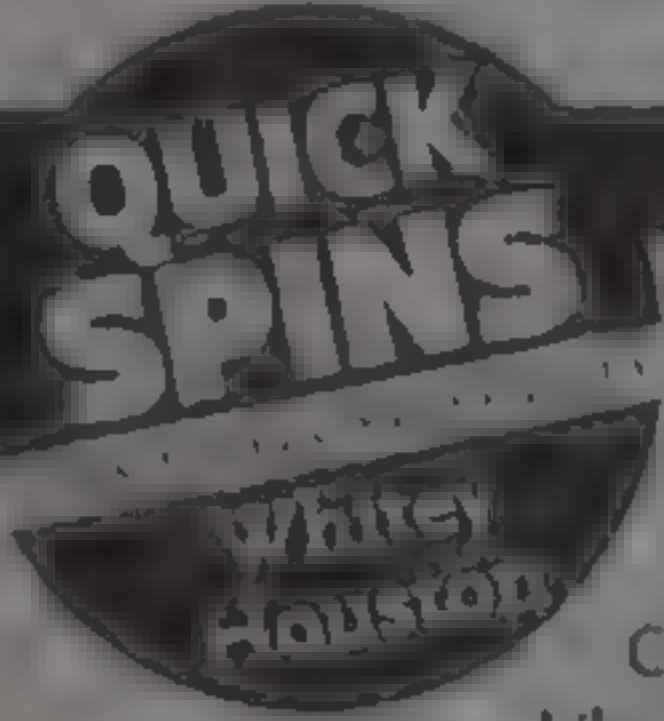
1972's *Dark Side of the Moon* would find a place on the charts for an unprecedented 741 weeks. Impressive, for sure, and the album certainly deserves some accolades for its scope. But Pink Floyd was not the first to visit a celestial body in rock music. The band beat the band to it, a year with *Ummagumma* and *Atom Heart Mother* of the Moon. Medicine Head

and released its first three albums on the British DJ John Peel's Dandelion Records. It was the band's third release that was titled *Dark Side of the Moon*, though beyond the name it shares little but influences and a few coincidental sounds with Pink Floyd's album; Medicine Head is more chugging folk-rock than trippy atmospherics. Medicine Head's sound is one that grew quite naturally out of the influence of the Beatles (and, likely, the Beatles' own influences) in the '60s and the shift towards heavier, distorted guitars in the late '60s/early '70s. As such, "Back to the Wall" opens the album with a repetitive chord progression and follows a generally straight line through to the song's end, avoiding any particular thrills in favour of steadiness and dependability. The second song finds the band on similarly solid footing, though the group spends a little more time finding some hills and valleys in the music, rather than plowing straight on through. Rewriting the rules is still not the focus here, but "In Your Eyes" is an understated ballad that carries itself respectfully. At times, there's a repetitiveness that wears thin—too many slow and meandering songs weigh the tempo and spirits

downwards—but even on "You and Me," another dragging beat, it's hard to argue with a vocal that musters a rallying cry midway through, transforming from sedate to borderline combative, and a guitar solo that cuts through the openness of the record's production with ease. That's the album that is truly impressive here; the record is not glossy, nor layered particularly deep, instead going with a liveness that makes it sound as though the band is captured live right off the floor, each instrument at home in its own space, yet all melding perfectly into a whole that is greater than

each piece on its own. As for the quality of the songwriting, "Kum On," regardless of a clumsy title, is a highlight, with a bongo-driven percussive layer, a united front of guitars—one wah-wah'd and funky, the other simply chugging determinedly along—and a hopeful chorus of "Nah, nah, nah," all together giving the song a feeling of survival, of triumph in the face of struggle. Medicine Head was surely able to construct a decent-enough song, but on *Dark Side of the Moon* the band lacks the sort of focus that would have turned this into a cohesive album, travelling through different soundscapes rather than treading over the same ground. It's on the closing track of *Dark Side of the Moon*, "You Can Make it Here," that Medicine Head's limitations come into full view: initially the song is built on a bluesy, walking guitar line not entirely unlike the one driven through the centre of Pink Floyd's "Money" off of '73's *Dark Side of the Moon*, though it's not as tightly focused as Floyd's. And from that point on, there's an unraveling in the sound, as Medicine Head drifts towards a Santana-esque beat for the closing jam-out, finishing the record with a puff of smoke rather than fireworks. V

Augury
Fragmentary Evidence
(Nuclear Blast)



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Celtic Thunder
Take Me Home
(Decca)

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Brokeneye
I'm Not a Fan ... but the Kids Like It!
(Break Silence)

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Brunch on Mother's day

Watermelon Slim
Escape from the Chicken Coop
(NorthernBlues)

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Time still had a Y

Michael Bernard Fitzgerald
The MBF Love LP
(Load)

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Are you a gelatinous pool of longing yet? Are you a perfumed garden of madly blooming purple explosions? Are you throbbing and gooey and half-nauseous with that delicious sickness some people called love? If not, I don't know what to tell you. By all astrological reckoning your gut should be swarming with drunk butterflies and the clouds should be taking on the shapes of mating horses. If you're not half-drowning in these symptoms, I implore you to find a way to pry open the floodgates.

TAURUS (Apr 20 - May 20)

You're primed to cancel a jinx in the coming days, Taurus. You could help someone (maybe even yourself) escape a bewitchment, and you might be able to soothe a wound that has been festering for a long time. In fact, I'm playing with the fantasy that you are now the living embodiment of a lucky charm. At no other time in recent memory have you had so much power to reverse the effects of perverse karma, bad habits and just plain negative vibes. Your hands and eyes are charged with good medicine. Other parts of you are, too, which means sexual healing could be in the works. But as you embark on your mission to cure everyone you love, remember the first law of the soul doctor: "Physician, heal thyself."

GEMINI (May 21 - Jun 20)

The Norwegians used to have a concept called *svoermere*, which meant something sweetly futile or deliciously unprofitable. While I can see the appeal that your par-

ticular version of *svoermere* has had for you, Gemini, I think it's time to think about moving on. According to my reading of the omens, you have both a right and a duty to seek out more constructive pleasures that not only make you feel really good but also serve your long-term goals.

CANCER (Jun 21 - Jul 22)

It's Freedom from Want Week! For Cancerians only! During this uncanny grace period, you might actually feel perfectly contented. It's quite possible that you'll be free from the obsession to acquire more security, more love, more proof of your greatness, more chotchkes, more everything. You may even make the shocking discovery that you don't need nearly as much as you thought you did in order to be happy; that maybe you have a lot to learn about getting more out of what you already have.

LEO (Jul 23 - Aug 22)

Would you like to spend the next 30 years working your assets off to make your bosses rich? If not, I suggest you start formulating Plan B immediately. The astrological time is not exactly ripe to extricate yourself from the wicked game, but it's ripe to begin scheming and dreaming about how to extricate yourself. Here's a tip to get you in the mood. Assume that there's some validity in the meme that mythologist Joseph Campbell articulated: "Follow your bliss and the money will come." Then ask yourself, "Do I even know what my bliss is? Not my mild joy or diversionary fun but my unadulterated bliss?" Once you know that, you can follow it.

And then, inevitably—although it may take a while—the money will follow.

VIRGO (Aug 23 - Sep 22)

As the season of riddles and paradoxes kicks into high gear, I present you with a two-part quiz. Question 1: Since it has taken you your whole life to become the person you are today, is it reasonable to expect that you can transform yourself in a flash? Question 2: On the other hand, since you are more creative than you give yourself credit for, and are also in an astrological phase when your ability to change is greater than usual, is it reasonable to assume that you must remain utterly stuck in your old ways of doing things?

LIBRA (Sep 23 - Oct 22)

So much to say and do. So little time. Is it OK if I pepper you with pithy hints? It's the only way to fit everything in. Here goes. There's strength in numbers, Libra. So travel in packs. Round up support and whip up group fervor. Always say "we," not "I." Add at least one new friend and bolster at least one old friendship. Think before you act, but always act instead of watching from afar. Avoid doing stupid things in smart ways. To court good luck, do charity work. To ensure that extra favors will come your way later this year, do extra favors now.

SCORPIO (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

The Biblical book of Isaiah prophesies a future time of undreamed-of harmony and cooperation. "The wolf will romp with the lamb," reads one translation. "Cow and bear will graze in the same pasture, their calves and cubs will grow up together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox." I have it on good astrological authority that

you're now eligible for a preview of this paradisiacal state. To receive your free introductory offer, you need only meet one condition. You must vow not to harm any living thing—not even a cockroach. Not even the person you love best.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You Sagittarians are famous for filling your cups too full. Sometimes this is cute. Sometimes it's a problem for those who don't like Cabernet Sauvignon sloshed on their handwoven Persian rugs. This week, however, I predict there will be little or no hell to pay for overflowing. So go ahead and transcend your containers, you beautiful exaggerators. Feel free to express yourself like a fire hose. Now enjoy a few gems from your fellow Sagittarius, the extravagant poet and painter William Blake. 1. "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom." 2. "Exuberance is beauty." 3. "The lust of the goat is the bounty of God." 4. "You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough."

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Constant vigilance, my friend. That's what I advise. Be attentive to details you sometimes gloss over. Wake up a little earlier and prepare for each encounter with greater forethought. Stare a little harder into the hearts of all those whose hidden motivations might detour your destiny. Monitor every communication for hints that all is not as it seems. Most importantly, guard against the possibility that you may be overlooking a gift or blessing that's being offered to you in an indirect way.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

Keep exploring what it takes to be the op-

posite of who you are," suggests psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of the book *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*. This advice is one of his ideas about how to get into a tunement with the Tao, also known as being in the zone or getting in the groove or being aligned with the great cosmic flow. How would you go about being the opposite of who you are, Aquarius? According to my reading of the omens, that will be an excellent question for you to mull about in the coming weeks. As you stretch yourself to embody the secret and previously unknown parts of you, I think you'll be pleased with how much more thoroughly that allows you to be in sync with the rhythms of life.

PISCES (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

Internet addiction has risen to epidemic proportions in China. In early 2009, psychologists in Shandong province began offering an alleged cure that involved the use of electro-shock therapy. Parents of 3000 young people paid Dr. Yang Yongxin and his team over \$800 a month to hook their anesthetized teens up to machines that sent electricity through their brains to induce artificial seizures. After four months, the Chinese government intervened and halted the treatment, noting that there was no evidence it worked. This practice might sound comically barbaric to you, but I think it has a certain resemblance to the way you have been dealing with your own flaws and excesses with inordinate force. In the coming weeks, I think it's important not to punish yourself for any reason, Pisces, even if it's in a supposed good cause. The lesson of the Chinese experiment is: not only is it overkill, it also doesn't even have the desired effect. ♀

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HOW TO FIND THE MAN OF YOUR DREAMS FantasyLand Hotel, WEM, www.findtheman.com • A discussion surrounding relationships—empowering women to gain the knowledge and confidence they need to acquire and keep the kind of relationship they have always dreamed of, presented by speaker and author Robin J. Elliott • Thu, Aug 13, 6pm (door); 7:30 (begins) • Portion of proceeds donated to Ballerina Dreams

CITY OF CHAMPIGNONS Devonian Botanic Garden, 5km N of Devon on Hwy 60, Devon, 780.687.2054, www.devonian.ab.ca • Mushroom and toadstool exposition • Sun, Aug 9

HEAL ME AND MY SHADOW Unity Church of Edmonton, Westmount Presbyterian Church, 1330-109 Ave • Film, In The Shadow Effect, reclaim the gold in your inner darkness. Explore the dark and light forces within you • Thu, Aug 9, 6 pm

RAW VEGAN EDMONTON/VEGETARIANS OF ALBERTA Riverdale Community League Park, (Indoors if it rains) • Aug potluck picnic in conjunction with Vegetarians of Alberta • Sat, Aug 9, 5:30pm • Free

TRADITIONAL SKILLS Village Lifestyles, 10420-79 Ave • Meeting with presentation by Heather Mackay, Dwight Forrest and Jessica Rieder who will talk about why Traditional Skills Edmonton was formed • Wed, Aug 5, 7-9:30pm • \$10-\$20 (donation)

AIKIKAI AIKIDO CLUB 10319-32 Ave, Old Synagogue Community League • Japanese Martial Art of Aikido • Every Tue 7:30-9:30pm; Thu 6-8pm

AWA 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP Braeside Presbyterian Church basement, FL door, 6 Bernard Dr, Bishop St, St. Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet Mondays including holidays, 7:30pm

BUDDHIST PRACTICE 10502-70 Ave, www.karnatashiling.ca • Meditation and Buddhist practice: Wed, 7pm • DVD's and discussion: Fri, 7pm • Free, beginners welcome

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION Suite 500, 10045-123 St, 780.414.6141 • Family support drop-in group for individuals who are supporting an adult family member who is living with a mental illness • Every Wed, 6:30-8:30pm

CHESS CLUB 780.474.2318 • Learn to play chess; opportunities for all ages including classes, school programs and tournaments • ruychessclub@shaw.ca

COUNTRY SOUL STROLL www.edmontoncountryside.com • Self-guided driving tour of Sturgeon County and the northern region of Edmonton's countryside • Until Sept 7

CRITICAL MASS RIDE City Hall, 102A Ave, 100 St • On the last Friday of every month, Critical Mass is held in Edmonton, starting at City Hall, and ending at Grasse Park • Fri, July 31, 5:30pm • Free

EDMONTON ESPERANTO SOCIETY Rm 1812, 10025-102A Ave, 780.702.5117 • Fri, noon-1pm • roughn@swardconsulting.com

EDMONTON GHOST TOURS Meet in front of the Rescue Statue next to the Walterdale Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave, 780.289.2005, www.edmontonghosttours.com • Walk through Old Strathcona and hear true stories of ghosts and hauntings • Mon-Thu, until Aug 20, 9pm • \$5

HISTORICAL TRANSIT TOURS Departures from City Hall, north side • Edmonton Transit System tours of Edmonton • Until Aug 15 • \$5 (regular tour)/\$10 (premium tour) at TIX on the Square

"HOME" ENERGISING SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY FOR PASSIONATE LIVING Garneau/Ashbourne Assisted Living Place, 11248-84 Ave • Home: Blends music, drama, creativity and reflection on sacred texts to energise you for passionate living • Every Sun 3-5pm

SUGARSWING DANCE CLUB Orange Hall, 10335-84 Ave, 780.404.7572 • Swing Dance at Sugar Pool Storm: no experience needed, beginner lesson followed by dance every Sat, Sat, Aug 1, 8pm (door);

www.sugarswing.com

WOMEN IN BLACK In Front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat, 10-11am, each month, stand in silence for a world without violence

COMEDY

CENTURY CASINO 23103 Fort Rd, 780.481.9857 • Shows start at 8pm Thu-Sat and late show at 10:30pm on Fri-Sat; \$12 (Thu)/\$19 (Fri/Sat) • Jason Rouse; July 31-Aug 1 • Johnny Gardhouse; Aug 7-8 • Gilson Lubin Aug 14-15 • Chris Quigley; Aug 21-22 • Jason Frederickson; Aug 28-29

COMEDY FACTORY Gateway Entertainment Centre, 34 Ave, Calgary Trail • Thu, 8:30pm; Sat, 8pm and 10pm

COMIC STRIP Bourbon St, WEM, 780.483.5999 • Wed-Fri, 8pm; Fri-Sat 10:30pm • Ruben Paul, Sean Lecomber and Kelly Soloduka; until July 31, Aug 1-2 • Hit or Miss Monday's; Mon, Aug 3 • Dan Cummins; Aug 5-9 • The Best of Edmonton. All local talent; Tue, Aug 4 • Dan Cummins, James Ball and Sean Lecomber; Wed, Aug 5-9

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave, 780.710.2119 • Comedy Night: Hosted by Lars Callicou • Every Sun, 9pm

LAUGH SHOP 1105-6606 137 Ave, Londonderry Mall, 780.476.1010 • Wed-Thu 8pm; Fri-Sat 7:30pm and 9:45pm

NEW CITY LIQUID LOUNGE 10081 Jasper Ave • Alternative comedy night presents Shelly 3:16 The Laugh Rapture, a night of religious comedy • Tue, Aug 4, 9pm

RIVER CREE RESORT Enoch, 780.484.2121 • Wayne Brady, Tue, Aug 4, 8:30 pm

QUEER

AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK-Red Deer Sunnybrook United Church, Red Deer, 403.347.6073 • Affirm welcome LGBTQ people and their friends, family, and allies meet the 2nd Tue, 7pm, each month

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP • A social group for bi-curious and bisexual women every 2nd Tue of the month, 8pm • groups.yahoo.com/group/bwedinmonton

BOOTS BAR AND LOUNGE 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014, www.bootsbar.ca • 2nd Thu: Illusions Social Club • 3rd Wed: Edmonton O Society • 2nd Tue: Edmonton Rainbow Business Association • Every Fri: Philosophy Café • Fri and Sat DJ SeXXy Sean 10-3 • Long Weekend Sundays feature the Stardust Lounge with Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725B Jasper Ave, 780.488.7736 • DJ Dust 'n' Time; Mon 9pm • DJ Arrow Chaser; Tue 9pm • DJ Dust 'n' Time; Wed 9pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Arrow Chaser; Fri 8pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Earth Shiver 'n' Quake; Sat 8pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Bobby Beat; Sun 9pm • Drag Queen Performance Show; Sun; no cover before 10pm

EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT) Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 St • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common interests meet the 2nd Sun, 2:30pm, most months for a social period, short meeting and guest speaker, discussion panel or potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. E: edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

GLBT SPORTS AND RECREATION www.teamedmonton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St, 780.465.1620; Wed, 6-7:30pm • Bootcamp; Lynnwood Elementary School at 15451-84 Ave; Mon, 7-8:15pm; bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling; Gateway Lanes, 100, 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat, 5-7pm; bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling; Mon, 7:15-9:15pm, Granite Curling Club; 780.463.9943 • Running; Sun, Tue, Thu; running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming; NAIT pool, 11762-106 St; Tue, 8-9pm, Thu, 7:30-8:30pm; swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; Tue Recreation: Mother Teresa Elementary School at 9008-105A, 8-10pm; Thu intermediate: Amiskwici Academy, 101 Airport Rd, 8-10pm; recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca; volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha); Free Yoga every Sun, 2-3:30pm; Korezone Fitness, 203, 10575-125 St, yoga@teamedmonton.ca

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB: CROSSDRESSERS 780.387.3343 • meet monthly • For info go to groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton_illusions/

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kwell@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St, www.

edmlivingpositive.ca, 1.877.975.9448/780.488.5768 • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue, 7-9pm: Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational/competitive swimming. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

PLAY NIGHTCLUB 10220-103 St, www.play-nightclub.ca • Open Thu, Fri, Sat • The first bar for the queer community to open in a decade with DJs Alex Brown and Eddie Toonflash

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON 9540-111 Ave, 780.488.3234, www.pridecentreofedmonton.org • Open Tue-Fri 2-10pm, Sat 2-6:30pm • LGBT Seniors Drop-in: Every Tue/Thu, 2-4pm • CA: Thu (7pm) • Suit Up and Show Up: AA big book study group every Sat, noon • Youth Understanding Youth: Up to 25 years, support and social group every Sat, 7-9pm; yuy@shaw.ca • Womospace: Board meeting 1st Sun every month, 10:30am-12:30pm • Trans Education/Support Group: Meet the 1st and 3rd Sun, 2-4pm, every month; www.albertatrans.org • Men Talking with Pride: Sun 7pm; facilitator: Rob Wells robwells780@hotmail.com • HIV Support Group: 2nd Mon every month, 7pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning (TTIQ) Alliance: Support meeting 2nd Tue every month, 7:30pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning. Education, advocacy and support for men, women and youth • Free short-term, solution-focused drop-in counseling; Wed, 7-10pm • YouthSpace: drop-in for LGBTQ for youth up to 25; Tue-Sat, 3-7pm

PRISM BAR 10524-101 St, 780.990.0038 • Wed: Free Pool; Karaoke, 9pm-midnight • Thu: Prism Pool League; 7-11:30pm • Fri: Steak Nites; 5-9pm; DJ at 9:30pm

ROBERTSON-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH 10209-123 St, 780.482.1587 • Soul OUTing: an LGBT-focused alternative worship • 2nd Sun every month, 7pm; worship Sun, 10:30am; people of all sexual orientations welcome. A LGBT monthly book club and film night. E: jrvenscroft@rwuc.org

ST PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH 11526-76 Ave, 780.436.1555 • People of all sexual orientations are welcome • Every Sun (10am worship)

WOMONSPACE 780.482.1794, www.womospace.ca, womospace@gmail.com • A Non-profit lesbian social organization for Edmonton and surrounding area. Monthly activities, newsletter, reduced rates included with membership. Confidentiality assured

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave, 780.488.6557 • Karaoke with Nathan; Mon 8pm • Martini Mondays; 3pm • You Don't Know Game Show with Patrick and Nathan; Thu 9pm • Long Island Iced Tea; Thu 3pm • Karaoke with Morgan; Wed 7pm • Karaoke with Kevin; Sun 8pm

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH www.yuyedm.ca • Meets every Sat, 7-9pm • Contact Scott for info email: info@yuyedm.ca, T: 780.248.1971

SPECIAL EVENTS

CARIWEST Various Downtown Venues • 780.421.7800 • carwestfestival.com • Edmonton Caribbean Arts Festival featuring a costume extravaganza, calypso competition and a gala parade • Aug 7-9

EDMONTON HERITAGE FESTIVAL Hermitage Park, www.heritage-festival.com • Aug 1-3; Sat 12-9pm; Sun 10am-9pm; Mon 10am-7pm • \$25 (a full sheet of 30 food tickets) available at TIX on the Square in advance

EDMONTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL Various locations, 780.439.2797, www.historicedmonton.ca • Tours, activities and entertainment at museums, historic sites and in communities • Until Aug 2

FAIRY BERRY FESTIVAL Prairie Gardens and Greenhouses, 56307 Lily Lake Rd, Bon Accord, 780.921.2272 • prairiegardens.org • And grand opening of the Great Prairie Cornfield Maze • Aug 1-3

HERITAGE AND HISTORIC EDMONTON WEEK 1.866.987.4323 • Until Aug 2

IGNITE CHANGE NOW! GLOBAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY 2009 NAIT, www.youthassembly.ca • Four-day conference for young people, 16-28, to explore issues of social justice and ways to ignite change in dynamic and innovative ways. Featuring speakers, workshops and evening events Film4Change, Shop4Change and the Governor General's Youth Dialogue and Concert • July 30-Aug 2 • \$199 (incl meals, access to all evening events)

OUR LOVE TO LINDSAY Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park • Benefit Showcase for the Thomas Family • Sun, Aug 9 • \$25 (adv) at TIX on the Square

UKRAINIAN DAY Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, 25 mins east on Hwy 16 • 780.662.3540 • www.culture.alberta.ca • Tribute to Ukrainian history, culture and community featuring entertainment, the Taste of Ukraine • Sun, Aug 9

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Why accept bigotry at all?

I'm getting sick and tired of being told that I need to be more understanding of other people's bigotry, that the way to solve prejudice is by embracing the intolerant and hoping that's enough, that I shouldn't be angry, or hateful, of the people who hate us. But I have to wonder, what do we gain when we shy away from challenging ideas?

It seems a utopian, idealistic vision to think that we can bridge the gap of bias by simply hugging it out. I've seen this flower-child approach resurfacing lately, at least in some of the circles I run in, but I'm no closer to making sense of it. The idea came to a head for me after watching an episode of CNN's *Larry King Live*. King was off and Dr. Drew Pinsky, known mostly as the celebrity rehab and teenage sex problems guy, was hosting a show that focused on trans issues. The

episode was almost entirely fantastic, with a wide variety of different trans-identified people being interviewed on the topic. I had just started to feel empowered for my trans brothers and sisters when a young transboy and his mother were introduced.

The teenager had come out a few years earlier and was now living his life as Ryan. His mom was introduced as supportive since, well, I don't know, because she was there? She kept referring to her "daughter" and talking about "Sarah" and generally used all the pronouns that Ryan didn't want to be identified with. She hinted that she thought this was a phase, all the while mentioning how welcoming and understanding she had been. Ryan looked visibly uncomfortable whenever his mother was talking and his mom had a smile plastered on her face that was most certainly

hiding deeper feelings of some kind.

Most frustrating was that when Dr. Pinsky spoke to Ryan, he used the correct male pronoun. But since his mother had yet to accept his gender, Pinsky would ask her questions about "Sarah," accommodating her uneducated behaviour right in front of the poor 15-year-old she was oppressing. Switching back and forth between identities in the interview was confusing to viewers and unnecessary since Ryan has clearly stated the way he wished to be identified. The piece closed with Pinsky once again commending her amazing mom skills.

Of course, this mother is a lot better than many, perhaps the majority, would be if their child came out as trans. But acceptance doesn't run on a sliding scale. That she was treating her child's gender identity on the same scale as a declaration of "I'm going to grow up to be a rockstar!" gave credence to the idea that

transidentification is something to be grown out of instead of a real idea. The interview seemed to be based on the idea that since she hadn't beaten her kid up or kicked him out of the house she was to be applauded for her acceptance.

When I expressed my outrage to friends I was told to cut her more slack, that she was doing her best and that it's hard for the parents of trans kids. Of course it is, but cheering people for being not totally intolerant? Is that really where we're at?

I'm not suggesting that one should go in with verbal guns blazing in response to every act of bigotry. When I say that I don't believe in accepting homophobic and transphobic comments, I don't mean that every discussion needs to turn into a battle or a screaming match; that's the worst way to respond, it doesn't validate any points and it just solidifies the bad ideas they have. If they scream, talk at a normal level until they're forced to come down to your volume. If they insult, don't appear affected. If they want to walk away, let them. You might have planted a seed that will ferment in their

brain and lead to them following up with you or to examining their own ideas at a later date.

There's also a huge difference between intolerance and ignorance. Intolerance is a choice, ignorance just happens. It's true that ignorance, unlike actual stupidity, can be fixed, but it's hard to learn about something if you don't realize that you don't know what you don't know. Follow? The ignorant need to be taught, and that can be done without anger, but it can't be done without the knowledge that something is wrong, it can't be done with puppies and rainbows and good vibrations.

Did the men and women at Stonewall ask for a quiet, calm chat? Did ACT UP ever request permission? Did Harvey Milk back down? Did the women at Compton Cafeteria take a seat on the curb when they were denied service that night?

We've become too used to taking the small inches that we're given. To be grateful when we're not visibly oppressed. If it's between hurting some feelings and destroying intolerance, well, baby, bring on the pain. **V**

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ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA HOSTS ONLINE VIDEO: Aspiring moviemakers, pick up your camcorders and capture your reality for the One Minute of Real Life Video Contest closing Aug 2, 11:59pm

VAAA Gallery Call for Submissions
VAA is seeking submissions for the 2010/11 schedule. **Deadline: Mon, Sept. 21, 4pm;** mail or drop off to Visual Arts Alberta Association, Attn Annual Exhibition Call for submission, Allison Argy-Burgess, Executive Director 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, T5K 1M7, T: 780.421.1731 for info

Call for artists-Kaleido 2009 Art Festival, Sept 25-27. Looking for all styles of work, any medium for art show and sale. Vendors for art market wanted also. Contact aota_artists@yahoo.ca for details

2010 EARTH EXHIBIT CALL TO ENTER:
The Works Art & Design Festival is currently accepting applications to take part in the 2010 Core Program of themed exhibits. **Deadline: Aug 29, 2009.** Download application at www.theworks.ab.ca

Call for Submissions for Gallery at Milner
Deadline: Oct 15, 2009; inquiries/applications to: Art Selection Committee T: 780.496.7030; E: cragalleries&displays@epl.ca

Submit exhibits for consideration in the following categories: Environmental Site Specific Installation; Curated Group Exhibit, Individual or Two Artist Exhibit, and Community Programs are invited to participate in 2010 at The Works Art Market and Food Street (deadline Feb. 15, 2010) and Street Stage (deadline Mar. 15, 2010). Application at www.theworks.ab.ca

The City of Edmonton Story Contest 2009/
Submit Stories by Fri, July 31, 2009, to take part in the contest. Info at: EdmontonStories.ca

Call to Artists - West Edmonton Skateboard Park Artwork Competition are requesting proposals for artworks depicting the skateboard culture, will be installed at the West Edmonton Skateboard Park, Calling-

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wood District Park, 178 St, 69 Ave. **Deadline July 31;** T: 780.944.5450 E: susan.meunier@edmonton.ca

Flatbed Productions is looking for girls 18-35 for Edmonton's 1st hot rod pin-up girl calendar event on Aug 21, 09. Go to Flatbed Productions group on Facebook or call Paul 780.270.4886

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Prof guitarist seeks something interesting-Brit pop or experimental band. Infl Eng beat, Ex-girl. Ph Bill 780.633.3849

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Unfriends with benefits

Dear Andrea:

Back in my wild and crazy early 20s I met a beautiful man through his 17-year-old brother. The brother asked him to go buy him cigarettes so without really investigating I assumed this guy was at least old enough to buy smokes. That evening we hooked up and began a whirlwind romance. A few days later I received a lecture from the 17-year-old brother that I really shouldn't be messing around with his baby brother. Turns out to my horror the person I'd already had a bunch of sex with and was now holding hands around the town with was many years my junior. It turned into small town high drama when we refused to stop dating and to make a long story short he turned out to be one of my favourite people, the best ex I ever had, and I find my life was enriched by the time I spent with him. Sadly I am still subjected to pedophile/cradle robbing jokes almost 15

years later, but what can you do?

Anyhow, we lost touch for over a decade until of course the miracle of Facebook. We chatted a few times, then I invited him to a party on events, never thinking he'd come. Lo and behold the party night I open my door to find him and his wife standing there, holding my favourite beverages from over a decade ago. He's got many kids now and we've both had a hell of a life since. Our friendship is reunited and I won't lose him again. Facebook rules!

Love, Young Love

Dear Young:

Well, you did rob the cradle! It's of interest to me, although surely fodder for a different column, that what you did would be met with nearly universal disgust and outrage had the genders been flipped. Instead, a story like yours usually earns

mostly giggles and expressions of fake scandalization (see cradle-robbing and even pedophile jokes), and since apparently the boy's friends knew back when you were robbing his cradle that he was hooking up with a mature, experienced woman maybe 10 years older than he was, I'm assuming he was the object of much envy and "way to go!" back-slapping. Of course, in your case it really does sound like both an innocent mistake (at first!) and a good time for all. Even so, it still worries me a bit, in retrospect.

A 15-year-old can give consent, and yours surely did, but I don't like the automatic assumption that sex with a much older partner is harmless fun for boys and, essentially, rape for girls. It can't be true all the time, in either direction. And that's not even touching on sex between willing but vulnerable teenage boys and much older, predatory men. I've seen the results of that, and they are often not very nice. I'd like to see teenagers counseled to trust their own

instincts and say no until they are quite sure they want to say yes, and then treated with respect for their choices. In an age of both anti-teen-sex hysteria and the mass promotion of teenage sex objects, that is not what we're getting, though, is it?

Oops. I guess I didn't save that rant for another column. Sorry! Where were we, again? Your long-ago affair sounds wacky (How could you not know? Did you think he was the older brother?) but ultimately quite fulfilling for all. I'm sure his wife is glad for his early tutelage. I'm glad you were glad to see each other. I'm glad you wrote. We're all glad, hurrah.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

I have one. I think "James" and I were friends in college, and also sometimes hooked up, and then would go back to being just friends again. I did hope back then that we would end up together eventually, but he always squirmed out of it, which hurt. After school, we lost touch. Now with Facebook I saw him show up in the "friends" of an-

other college friend and got in touch and he seemed happy to hear from me. We're both divorced, and living about an hour and a half apart. Should I?

Love, Friendly

Dear Friend:

Well, that depends. Back when you were doing the friend with benefits thing, how much of a shit was he being about it? As I've said before, the FWB arrangement can be a mutual satisfaction device like no other, or an instrument of torture. What if one "friend" gets attached and the other continues to pull up pants and say "seeya!" and shrug off any pleas for more time, care or affection, since after all we're all just friends here? That's your shit for you. So which one was he? Shit/not shit, and if shit, has he outgrown it yet?

If you do meet, you can always tell him that his actions caused you pain and see how he takes it. That should work as a shitometer, I'd think. If he laughs you off, unfriend, unfriend!

Love, Andrea

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